

PARCC System to Replace MCAS

By KAREN WANG, II &
ALICIA ZOU, V
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

You are sitting at an uncomfortable desk, filling in endless bubbles with a number two pencil. Does this sound familiar? Well, soon the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests might not be something you have to worry about anymore. This spring, many schools across Massachusetts will be running test trials of a new exam called the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) as a possible replacement for the MCAS.

The PARCC is designed very differently than the MCAS. First of all, this assessment will be taken online, rather than on a paper booklet, and it will assess students' understanding of various topics by asking them to discuss the reasoning behind their answers. Another major difference is that questions on the PARCC will be phrased differently to force students to think more, therefore

creating a greater challenge.

The MCAS was never designed to prepare students for colleges and careers, but the PARCC is specifically geared towards measuring the skills students need to be college-ready and career-ready. A main goal is to introduce students to relevant knowledge at an earlier age. "This is a step in pushing standards higher and pushing kids to think harder, to be better, and to be able to persist and achieve in college," said Karen Daniels, an educational consultant and previous school administrator, in an interview for the Boston Globe before voting in favor of the new exam.

While many are supportive of this transition to the PARCC, there are some who oppose its adoption. Jim Stergios, executive director of the independent research organization, The Pioneer Institute, believes that "[it] is truly a step backward." A general concern is that some schools have more computers available than others to simultaneously test students; therefore, money would

have to come out of budgets to pay for more computers, depleting funds available for school repairs and supplies. Also, there is a possibility that adjusting to a different testing system may result in lower exam scores on these new tests, which could ultimately make it more difficult for students to earn diplomas. According to state law, tenth graders must pass the standardized test in order to graduate high school, so as a precaution, schools elected to try out the PARCC will have an option for tenth graders to take the MCAS instead. Mitchell Chester, Commissioner of Massachusetts public schools and chair of the national PARCC Governing Board, expects the PARCC and MCAS to be similar in difficulty for third through eighth grade, but possibly more challenging for tenth grade. "I hope this will be a new generation of assessments that will do a better job of signaling to students whether they will have success when they move to the next level and ultimately [if] they will be ready for success in the real

world," said Chester.

In the spring, two-thirds of MA schools will be experimenting with the new exam in either English or math sections, but the science MCAS will continue to be implemented; if the PARCC proves successful, it will replace the MCAS as the new graduation requirement. This, however, is definitely not an overnight decision. The state will continue to deliberate for two more years before officially deciding which test to use. "We want to be confident when we do make the decision that there is an improvement over our current MCAS condition," said Chester. Nevertheless, according to Mr. Bilodeau, here at BLS our mathematics teachers have been implementing the necessary changes in the classroom to include the Common Core, the standards around which the new test is based. As some of our teachers, including Ms. Gribaudo and Ms. Cojohn, have been preparing for the PARCC by doing online testing, it seems likely that this change will be executed in the near future.

Half Days with Late Arrivals a Possibility

By ALICE XIAO, I
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

How would you like to sleep in twice a month and still be on time for school?

A proposed schedule change for the 2014-2015 school year would involve 14 late arrival days for students in order to allow for teachers to meet in the mornings instead of after school. Teachers would meet from 7:45-10:00 A.M. and students would be in homeroom by 10:20 A.M. In addition, there would be three half-days with early dismissal for final exams in June. To make up for lost time, the normal school day would end at 2:30 P.M. This would only be in effect at Boston Latin School (BLS).

"The idea is to get teachers meetings in a time when teachers are more happy about meetings," said Mr. Malcolm Flynn, Assistant Headmaster. "After five classes sitting in a meeting can be tiring."

Currently teachers meet from 2:30-4:30 P.M. once a month, which can pose a problem for teachers who run after-school activities such as sports, music and clubs. An early dismissal option



YOU COULD STILL BE ASLEEP AT THIS TIME ON SOME SCHOOLS DAYS NEXT YEAR

for the plan was considered in previous years but was shot down by concerns that it would affect after-school activities as well.

"If we dismiss kids at noon, but we have band practice at 2:15, what

are kids going to do until then?" asked Mr. Flynn, echoing some of the faculty's reservations.

The new plan would increase teachers' meeting time from 18 hours a year to 31.5, a 75 percent increase. Teachers would spend a large portion of that time working on curriculum uniformity and consistency in what is being taught across different classes in the same subject. It would allow for more time to assess student strengths and weaknesses and to work on ways to teach the material more effectively.

Many teachers, however, are wary of the proposed schedule, citing concerns about the disruption of classes across sections. In the current plan, on late arrival days there would only be four periods.

"It doesn't seem doable to have some classes tested ahead of others, maintaining a holding pattern until the other courses have caught up, especially with AP courses," said an Advanced Placement Economics teacher who wishes to remain unnamed. "In classes where you have a fairly packed reading schedule, I can see doubled up reading assignments and quizzes to keep up."

A possible solution that may be discussed is to have shorter periods on the late arrival day so that all sections can meet. Indeed, some teachers, like Ms. Elizabeth Hauck, "don't quite understand why the abbreviated 20 minute period isn't an option."

Students, however, are more amenable to these proposed changes.

"I think it'd be really good for students because many of us go to sleep at 12 and waking up at 9 is a lot better," said Linh Pham (IV). "I already stay that late at school anyway so an extra 15 minutes doesn't matter."

Both students and teachers seem to like the early dismissal for finals in June.

Continued on page 6

News Tidbits

>>Assistant Headmaster Ms. McCoy has recently received the Paul J. Hunter Massachusetts Assistant Principal of the Year from the National Association of Secondary School Principals. She will go on to represent Massachusetts at the national level.

>>Nobel Laureate Dr. Eric Maskin, an economics professor at Harvard University, came to BLS on January 31st to speak to AP Economics students and answer questions. One student, Allie Kennelly (I) said, "I really appreciated being able to speak with someone who is applying what we learn in class in the real world." Dr. Maskin's presenta-

tion included his work on Mechanism Design: How to implement social goals.

>>In the coming 2014-2015 school year, the English department will be terminating the senior research paper in favor of 4 shorter papers spread throughout the school year. This change hopes to create a less stressful year for seniors and particularly those in the Capstone pilot program. Because the senior research paper is ending, passing the junior research paper will now be a graduation requirement.

>>The 2014 Olympics in Sochi unfortunately did not go off with the expected bang. During the opening ceremony, 5 snowflakes were supposed to float down and come together

expanding into 5 rings and forming the symbol of the Olympics. Unfortunately, the fifth snowflake never turned into a ring and none of the rings burst into fireworks like they were supposed to. Embarrassed by this mishap, Russian television stations switched to coverage of the opening ceremony from the rehearsal.

>>A German doctor recently cured a man of an obscure disease...by watching the medical TV show House. Dr. Juergen, a huge fan of the show who uses episodes as a teaching tool for his students, says that he finally figured out the correct diagnoses after watching an episode in which the patient had the same symptoms (and disease) as Juergen's real life patient.

gen's real life patient.

>>A 300 year old highly valued Stradivarius violin was recently recovered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Three people have been arrested in connection with the theft.

>>This year, the Super Bowl got aggressive off the field. At a Super Bowl party in Rochester, New York, Sean Fallon-Nebbia bit off his brother's ear at the conclusion of the game, when play fighting turned into an intense brawl, according to police. The victim was taken into the emergency room and doctors say the victim's face will be permanently disfigured. The victim's brother was charged with felony assault and is being held on a \$15,000 bond.

Editors’ Note

Happy Belated New Year, everyone! This is a fun issue, and even though we were interrupted by a snow day we got it on track. We’re happy to say that this issue of the Argo will be online! It will be in a very nice little PDF viewer at bls.org under “Publications,” so tell your parents, tell alumni you know and most importantly, send a chain email to your friends about it! Admittedly, it’s no “Boston.com” but we’ve gotta work our way up. Or we could institute a journalism class *hint hint, Mr. Flynn* so that we can really step up the level of journalism at the Argo! Shoutout to Mr. Hourigan for being a really cool guy.

Anyway, you’re probably asking yourself, “What’s in this issue of the Argo, after all?” Well, you shouldn’t be asking yourself that. We’re the ones

with the answers, after all. This issue has lots of student opinions on Mayor Walsh, marijuana legalization and the best burrito in Boston. We’ve got schedule changes coming in next year, a new alternative to the senior research paper (it’s the curse of 2014!) and an MCAS alternative. It’s a sad day, because we love the MCAS. Nothing beats sitting on hard stools with no backs in the dining hall for three hours to fill in bubbles. Are we bitter? Yes. But so is lemonade without sugar.

We’d also like to say, while we have the chance, that the two of us vehemently disagree with the findings on the burrito article. We do not believe that Chipotle is the best burrito in the Boston area. We do not even believe it is good. Or a burrito, for that matter. Chipotle is awful, in our own humble

opinions. That being said, we respect the opinions of our staff and readers and wish to portray the news as objectively as possible. But Chipotle is still bad.

So we hope you enjoy this issue of the Argo, because we’ve all worked especially hard on it. Not to mention that sitting in the computer lab at 9 P.M. on a Friday night while the Tet festival is blasting party music from the dining hall is always fun too. We’re also both sick. But then again, I guess we can’t complain because basically half the school is down with something. Is it a return of Swine ‘09? Only time will tell. For now, let’s just hope for peace in the Middle East.

Love,
Alice and Mike (who really wrote this)
P.S. Anna’s Taqueria is the best.

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Boston Latin School
Argo

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BLS Pilots the Capstone Project

By SYLVIE STOLOFF, II
NEWS EDITOR

For a school that prides itself on a college preparatory education, Boston Latin School often receives a common complaint about the students' lack of freedom when it comes to their subject material—a type of freedom which is typical in college. Well, no more need to complain! Next year, Ms. Freeman and Mr. Mikalaitis are introducing a new course at BLS—the Capstone Project, an advanced independent research and presentation seminar. Intimidating name? Maybe, but the Capstone Project offers an exciting opportunity that will allow students to pursue research on a topic that they truly care about through a variety of fun media, from making a documentary to building a robot and more.

The essential goal behind the Capstone Project is to create an authentic learning experience in which students can define the nature of their own education, a refreshing alternative to the grinding, stressful work of most textbook-based courses. This means that the students propose and conduct their own interdisciplinary projects. During the first two terms of the year, Ms. Freeman and Mr. Mikalaitis will lead a seminar in researching, collecting, analyzing and presenting information which will cover some helpful areas, such as learning how to pick a “meaty enough” topic that will provide for a project of sufficient length and detail. This first part of the class, centered around the

theme of food, will analyze the topic from all different angles in a class that is project-based and utilizes articles and videos rather than textbooks. Using the context of food and its many different areas of study, students will learn the skills necessary to form a proposal for their final Capstone Projects, which may or may not have anything to do with the topic of food.

In the final two terms of the year, students will work on these projects. As the class will most likely meet in a room furnished with technology, stu-

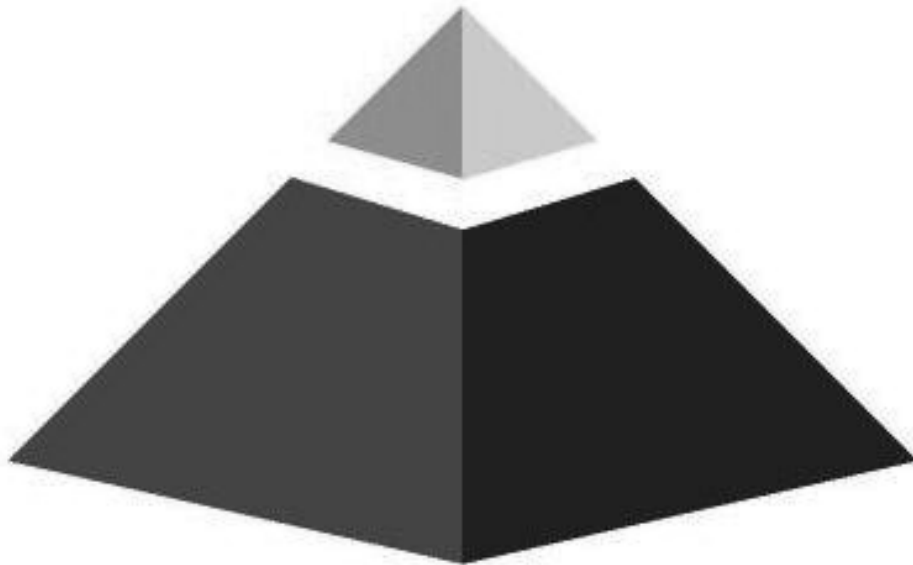
“robot” for pretty much any other word, and you get the idea. Additionally, students will all have the same check-in points over the course of the year, and they will have to write blog entries about their progress and then produce the final project, all of which will determine the bulk of their term three and four grades. At the end of the year, students will present their projects in front of a large audience.

As with any new course, there are many details to finalize. For instance, there has been discussion about offering

Capstone students the opportunity to leave school early (on days when the class meets R7) to conduct research. Although there is no final verdict, students may have this opportunity if its liabilities are worked out. Furthermore, many of the decisions surrounding this course will be implemented once student feedback is received via an application questionnaire. Since students

would have to suggest a topic for their project on this form (don't worry—it's not final), their answers would give an idea of what types of materials to purchase and what kind of mentors to talk to.

There are many advantages to taking Capstone, but naturally they do not come without hard work; the Capstone Project is very demanding, and it is a lot of work that will be difficult to balance with certain course loads. Since next year features only one pilot section, only 24 upcoming seniors will be able to take Capstone in the 2014-2015 school year. If you are interested, the application can be found at <http://goo.gl/PSmbph>.



THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

dents will be able to conduct research or contact mentors in class. Faculty members will serve as students' mentors, and meet with them regularly to discuss their projects. Of course, this second half of the year would be very open-ended, but Ms. Freeman assures future students that they will receive tons of support. Although each person will have his or her own individual focus, the process of conducting this research is very structured. For example, a person building a robot would ask himself, “What is unique about my robot compared to other robots? Why is my particular robot necessary in today's world?” Substitute

ALPHA: Securing Smooth Transitions

By VICKY GRINBERG, II
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“What is ALPHA Transition?” is the most popular response from students when asked about the program. It is not exactly surprising that most kids do not know about this program because this is its first year at Boston Latin School (BLS). Essentially, it is a system to gradually transition students who have been absent for long periods of time—sometimes for two weeks, sometimes for a month or two—back into the stressful curriculum of BLS. ALPHA stands for “A Learning Place for Healing Adolescents,” and that is exactly what is. It is described as a short-term process to help integrate students back into the Boston Latin life.

Inspired by similar programs at Brookline High, Lexington High and Wellesley High, this program was started by Ms. Grillo and Dr. Cohen. Both teachers brought it to fruition and continue to work hard so that everything runs smoothly. Ms. Grillo says that it exists as a support mechanism and to “give students the resources they need to be successful and jump back in.”

There are two integral parts to this program: the academic and the emotional. Ms. Grillo is the academic coordinator—she works with teachers to help ease the student back into the course

without overwhelming him or her. For example, if the student is having trouble communicating with a certain teacher, Ms. Grillo will correspond with the teacher to help develop a reasonable schedule of make-up work. The social and emotional side is managed by the school psychologist, Dr. Cohen, and his two interns, Dorice Moise and Erik Maki. They valiantly help the student manage the stress and nerves that inevitably accompany Boston Latin School.

Unfortunately, this program is only available to students who have been absent for more than a few days, due to factors like serious illnesses or familial responsibilities. The program helps students who are recommended by a doctor or guidance counselor and is geared towards more intensive cases of absences. If you are part of ALPHA, your teachers know that you have been absent for a valid and serious reason.

Ms. Grillo says that the teachers have been extremely flexible and supportive of this program, but that there are still difficulties and the coordinators take everything case by case. “This school has really smart kids, but the reality is that things come up that sometimes are out of our control. We just try to help the student succeed.”

Most students interviewed seemed to approve of ALPHA. Victoria Kwong (II) says, “I think this program will be

strongly appreciated by students, and I believe that it is important to incorporate it into school systems. Catching up on work can be difficult to do, especially when students are expected to complete the work they've missed and the work that's due on the day they return. It seems unfair for someone to have to face the consequences of something they couldn't control.”

The fact that this program is so unheard of only further enforces its necessity. Kara-Jianna Undag (II) says that she had never heard of it before, but thinks it is important for schools to recognize it: “Especially in high school, students can't afford to miss work, even if it's just a few homework assignments. Every grade counts, and I think this program would be extremely beneficial in helping the student get the best grade possible.”

Ms. Grillo says that, hopefully, this project will continue. So far, it has been very helpful to the students participating, as well as to the teachers, who are now less worried about catching up a student in a way that is fair to everybody. She says it has been a great experience to start something like this, especially because it such a vanguard—it is the first one within the Boston Public Schools—and has already helped many students transition safely back into the throes of Boston Latin School.

Spotlight Kevin Zhu



By HARRY XUE, I
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

He was born on the cold hard streets of Philadelphia, the only son of a Roman Catholic Italian-American family. On the streets he learned how to survive, to fight. He was sometimes so hungry and thirsty that he had to resort to eating soggy newspapers and drinking the sweat of his fallen foes. Nevertheless, eventually he made his way to the boxing ring and is now poised to be the next heavyweight champion of the world.

Okay, I might have lied about the Roman Catholic Italian-American part, but everything else is absolutely true about Kevin Zhu.

I first met the awesome Kevin Zhu in sixth grade at the awesome school formerly known as the Thomas A. Edison Middle School (now less awesomely known as the Thomas A. Edison K-8 School). At the time, Kevin was just as short as he is now, substantially chubbier than I am now and really into McDonald's. In fact he used to go there every day and ingeniously conceal the bag in his backpack so his mom wouldn't know. Seven years later, and I can tell you that Kevin is still really into McDonald's. We go together at least once every week—although Popeye's has been added to the mix as well.

In all seriousness though, Kevin can't sing to save his life and he's horrible at writing with his right hand. Fortunately, he does happen to be a fantastic whistler and a great friend. I admire him for putting up with me for the past seven years. I would have quit a long time ago if I were in his place.

Kevin is known for his strong opinions. He is pro-second amendment, pro-life and pro-kittens. He believes that Tahiti is where dreams go to die and his lifelong dream is to not end up living in Tahiti. As he often reminds me, “Warm weather makes you lose your edge.” Luckily Kevin will be able to keep his edge because next year he will be attending that prestigious college in Cambridge that is not MIT. Oops, I almost forgot to mention that in addition to being a gentleman, a scholar and one of the captains of Mock Trial, Kevin has a six-pack. I know, life is unfair. Also, I'm sorry ladies (and guys) but he's already taken.

So if you see a tall heavyset Italian guy walking in the halls, he probably is not Kevin Zhu. If, however, you do happen to spot a lean mean Asian fighting machine in close proximity to the boys' bathroom next to the Seevak room, beware. Chances are you'll be knocked out by his dazzling hair and sparkling personality.

Club Spotlight
BLS Red Cross Turns Ten

By Karen Wang, II
Contributing Writer

Most people have heard of the Red Cross organization, but they might be surprised to learn that the Red Cross Club is nearing its ten year anniversary at Boston Latin School (BLS). Founded in 2005, this club is dedicated to help the American Red Cross fulfill its humanitarian mission. Organizing it, however, is not easy; Co-Presidents Brian Mangilog (I) and Jennifer Yu (I), Chief Administrative Officer Connie Wong (I), Public Relations Luke Zhao (III) and Allen Zou (III), Event Coordinators Lina Liu (III) and Leland Wu (III) and Webmaster Karen Wang (II) are all extremely involved in planning meetings and school wide events.

Members work closely with the local Massachusetts Bay Chapter and participate in American Red Cross service projects that impact their community and the world. During biweekly meetings, students learn about international and local issues. Event coordinator Lina Liu says, “I think Red Cross is important because it raises awareness of the natural disasters around us and helps those who are in need.” In the most recent meetings, members learned safety tips about fire and water-related natural disasters through engaging, hands-on activities.

Throughout the school year, the Red Cross club announces volunteer opportunities and school events to promote worldwide equality, fairness and health. Co-President Jennifer Yu reflects, “We taught our members to be more engaged and involved with the greater community. Especially with the blood drive, students in our school learn the importance of giving back.” This year, in wake of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, BLS Red Cross teamed up with the Filipino Club to organize the Rising Above the Waters fundraising event. Members are active participants in out-of-school events as well. For example, last October, dedicated members stood outside in the freezing rain to cheer on volunteers in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk. Most importantly, members have learned the importance of helping themselves by helping others. Chief Administrative Officer Connie Wong says, “Being involved in Red Cross has connected me to a strong community of people who donate their time to helping others. It is rewarding to see how the work we do impacts so many.” Additionally, members discover many new opportunities for self-development and are encouraged to complete activities that will most effectively fulfill community needs. According to Co-President Brian Mangilog, “The Red Cross club has given students the chance to volunteer and get involved with the community and people around the world.”

Many officers are also members of the Massachusetts Youth Advisory Board, which provides a committee of diverse and motivated Red Cross youth volunteers with leadership opportunities. High school students from around the state come together to discuss upcoming projects that support the Red Cross mission. If you want to get involved in the largest volunteer organization in the world and make a difference in your school and community, send an email to redcrossbbs@gmail.com. It is not too late to start coming to meetings, which take place every other Thursday in room 228.

California Students Fight Tenure Policy

By Anton Xue, II &
Jonathan Zou, III
Contributing Writers

Most Boston Latin School students can attest to the impact a good teacher makes. In fact, various studies indicate monumental effects of such teachers on student development, from increasing the likeliness of a student to attend college to reducing the number of teenage parents. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that good teachers can raise a child’s cumulative lifetime income by as much as \$80,000, according to a recent study done by Harvard and Columbia University professors. So what can school systems do to ensure that their teachers are performing at such high levels? In California, some students think that their school system is doing the opposite; they claim that the current tenure system is protecting bad teachers.

A group of nine students from Los Angeles, California filed a lawsuit against California’s Tenure Laws, seeking to rid the state of policies such as teacher tenure and seniority. They claim that tenure policies protect bad teachers, who under the system would be very difficult to fire. A recent study using the transcripts of Northwestern University freshmen (from 2001 through 2008) corroborates this idea. Comparing faculty with tenure to those without it, these scientists found that non-tenure track professors tended to outperform tenured professors in terms of inspiration and preparation; students taught by a non-tenure track professor were seven percent more likely to take a second course in the same field and get higher grades in that class.

Attorneys for the governor, the state education department and teacher unions, however, say that such extreme reforms are not necessary. They point to the benefits and good intentions of tenure systems, which are designed to prevent the removal



CALIFORNIA STUDENTS ARGUING THEIR CASE

of teachers without just cause. Before the establishment of the tenure laws in the 1920s, teachers could be fired on the spot for any reason or offense. Female teachers were often targeted, and were fired for reasons such as wearing pants, going out late or even getting married. Nowadays tenure tracks give teachers better job security, which studies have shown often correlates with job performance. Additionally, Attorney James Finberg argues that tenure “permits a teacher to teach the curriculum that’s appropriate for students, without worrying that a member of the board...is going to have a different view about [controversial] subjects like Islam or climate change and decide to get rid of the teacher.” It all comes down to the results, however. Although tenure may give teachers the opportunity to expand their teaching strategies, curricula are very closely regimented and job security can often lead to inaction in a teacher who knows he or she cannot be fired without committing a larger offense than simply performing poorly.

It is not just California whose tenure system has been called into question. Several flaws were found in the Boston Public School (BPS) system as well, according to a study done by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) in 2010. By law, all tenured teachers are supposed to be evalu-

ated every two years and non-tenured teachers every year. The BPS records, however, reveal that only half of the teachers have been evaluated, and a quarter of schools did not even turn in a single evaluation. The NCTQ also adds that the tenure system is based on the number of years a teacher has worked—not on teacher performance. This means that under the BPS tenure system, even unsatisfactory teachers are protected, although they do have to undergo a remediation program that can last two-thirds of a school year if numerous complaints are filed against them. If the evaluations for this remediation program are mistimed, however, it can extend into the following school year, disturbing students’ education and prolonging student interaction with an unsatisfactory teacher. Teachers can also appeal a district’s decision multiple times, further prolonging the dismissal process.

Despite the controversy, one fact remains unequivocal: the education of the student should be a district’s first priority. Whether a tenure system provides job security for good teachers or protects bad ones, it is ultimately the responsibility of the teachers, the schools and the districts to make sure that subject matter is effectively taught and that students are getting the best education possible.

BSU Fosters Civic Engagement at BLS

By Isabelle DeSisto, II
Assistant News Editor

Can you guess what percent of sixies feel stressed at school? Survey results from Boston Latin School’s very own Boston Student Union (BSU) reveal this and even more striking data. The survey administered to all classes last year is part of the BSU’s mission to foster a greater sense of “civic engagement” at BLS. To them, this integral part of the school’s mission statement is something that needs to be improved. Yet despite being a relatively new organization, the BSU is already seeing some major gains. With contact information from 1,800 of the school’s roughly 2,400 students and student representation from each of the six classes, they are looking to use “the voices of young people” as a vehicle for much-needed change.

At BLS and in the Boston Public School system in general, students often express frustration at their lack of sway in decision-making processes. But things are changing, thanks to the BSU. “By literally, and metaphorically, making room for students at the table when decisions are being made, we will set the example for the rest of BPS that students are resources when it comes to improving their own educational

experiences,” asserts Rose Silverman (I), co-president of the BSU along with Hannah Givertz (I). Having already been granted opportunities to make presentations to Dr. Mooney-Teta and other faculty, the organization is exemplifying this new attitude, and hopes to extend its efforts even further in time to come.

Already, the BSU has made sizable steps towards giving BLS students a louder voice when it comes to matters that affect them directly. The survey mentioned above, for example, collected, counted and recorded a remarkable 2,000 individual responses in what was sure to have been a laborious and time-consuming process. Although most results are still under wraps, data about stress at BLS shows some telling trends.

From the 2,000 surveys tallied, 76 percent indicated “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” in response to a question asking if students feel “unhealthy levels of stress” at BLS. Results varied by gender, class, academic status and even neighborhood! For example, 94 percent of juniors agreed with the statement, compared to only 50 percent of sixies. Furthermore, 88 percent of students from Chinatown felt stressed, whereas only 64 percent of those living in the North End did.

Such data has helped to inspire

some of the BSU’s weekly meetings. Thus far in the 2013-14 school year, the organization has begun to host forums where students are able to share their classroom experiences, and facilitate workshops focusing on stress and effective teaching methods. Emilio Vides-Curnen (II), a member of the BSU, thinks these implementations represent a “positive effort to get change at the school” and will ultimately “make student life better.” Proposal writing sessions also will hopefully be able to elicit change and a greater student input in school life. “The Boston Student Union stems from students’ dissatisfaction with this status quo,” explains Silverman, “but if BLS were to truly seize and harness the energy and passion that the students’ of the Union have, our school has the ability to be a more united and informed community.”

Looking to be a part of this community? The BSU meets every Tuesday from 3:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. in room 337, and welcomes anyone who wishes to attend—that includes students from other schools. With contacts in several other BPS schools including Boston Arts Academy, students have already attended a meeting—the mission of the Boston Student Union is spreading. So get excited, BLS, your messages are finally being heard!

News

Snapchat, Snap Out of It!

By **BEN WU, V & JONATHAN LI, V**
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

We have all seen some pretty weird stuff on Snapchat. Most of it is from our friends, but you may have gotten the occasional peculiar message from a total stranger. The reason behind this is a recent Snapchat leak. Some “white hat hackers” leaked 4.6 million usernames with their corresponding phone numbers (the last two digits of the phone numbers were blurred) on the site, SnapchatDB.info, to make the point that Snapchat’s security was easily bypassed. The site was suspended, but the information released was widely downloaded.

Snapchat is a mobile application that lets users instantly send pictures or videos to their chosen friends and family. Since its birth

in 2011, it has taken off and is now one of the most popular applications to date. Snapchat’s appeal is its limited life—the picture disappears after a pre-determined amount of time. However, a message can simply be saved by its receiver by taking a screenshot; the disappearance of any image is not guaranteed. The recent evolution of social media provided Snapchat with the perfect avenue to popularity. In fact, Snapchat was becoming so popular that Facebook recently tried to buy it out for 3 billion dollars. Snapchat executives said no. After this failed buyout attempt, Facebook released its own disappearing photo app, “Poke.”

Hacking is becoming so popular that recently, sixteen-year-old Graham Smith wrote a program to get around Snapchat’s “Finding Friends” feature, where you

can search for people that you may know who use Snapchat. To use the “Finding Friends” add-on, you have to enter your own phone number so that Snapchat can go through its own database of phone numbers to find someone that is in your contact book. Snapchat was warned about the possibility of numbers being hacked back in August, and executives claimed they had fixed it. Clearly, this was not the case.

“I think that, as developers, they have a certain responsibility to their app users. Since their users are essentially downloading their app with a certain trust, they must uphold a certain amount of privacy, which is pretty much the whole point of Snapchat[’s self-erasing messages]. But there’s nothing they can really help about a security breach, it’s just a matter of correction and damage con-

trol,” remarks Alex Kim (I). Snapchat released a new update that not only allows users to turn off the “Finding Friends” feature, but also lets them verify their phone numbers. The Snapchat team has also attempted to block off any more API (Application Programming Interface) attacks.

Social media will always be social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and especially Snapchat will all have their flaws, but it is okay. “Nothing can stop me from using Snapchat; it’s okay if the program is sometimes flawed,” says Kristen Fields (II). Social media should be a fun and convenient way of communicating with loved ones and not a way of losing one’s privacy. There will be good times and bad times for social media companies, but their core missions will always be good—to bring people together.

An End to the Pizza Famine

By **CASSIDY GIACOPPO, II**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Many students at Boston Latin School look forward to the end of the week, not only for the weekend, but for Free Pizza Friday. Students plan out the fastest route to make it to the Dining Hall and bolt out of class—some even leave early, just so that they can be the first person in line to get their pizza, free of charge. There is hustle and bustle during all of the lunch periods as students trample each other for a slice of pizza. On Free Pizza Friday, everybody is a sixie!

Up until recently, however, those who were at the end of the lunch line during third lunch found that, by the time they reached the front, there was no pizza left. Undoubtedly, many of you have felt the dismay that comes with reluctantly grabbing a sandwich as an alternative to the sizzling, cheesy pizza. One sixie complains, “I was looking forward to getting a slice of pizza, only to find out there was none left. After waiting in line, I was handed a sandwich and was quite disappointed” (Tessa Giacoppo, VI). Students found it unfair that, just because they happened to have third lunch, they were denied this free deli-

cacy.

All this excitement in anticipation of Free Pizza Friday, coined “FPF” by the avid twitter users, has culminated in gargantuan lines which, although they do add to the experience, come at

the elimination of costs for all other food this year has lengthened the lines on Monday through Thursday, the FPF lines are unprecedented in length, bordering on ridiculous.

The cafeteria staff did not an-

weeks ago] we had some pizza left over, even though it was only three slices. We finally got to exactly where we need to be; it is just unfortunate that it is so late in the year.” Although in the past some ill-fated students were not able to receive pizza, it is very likely that students will not go without any, now that the number of necessary pizzas is known. Hopefully, this new data will eliminate the need for such chaotic races to the cafeteria in the future.

The determined number of pizzas is shockingly high; most students underestimate the work undertaken by the kitchen staff. On a regular day (Monday through Thursday), 110 to 150 slices of pizza are cooked. On Friday, to accommodate the frenzy, that number skyrockets to about ten times more. Seventeen cases, which is about 1,400 to 1,500 slices of pizza, are produced every Free Pizza Friday. “Since there is so much pizza to be cooked on Fridays, we have to start cooking at 9:45 A.M. I am hoping that we do just as well [number-wise] as recently and we will put on another case of pizzas just to be safe.” Now that the dearth of pizza has been resolved, everyone can enjoy his or her pizza, and maybe, though likely not, stop having such a commotion over free food.



STUDENTS SPRINTING FOR A SLICE OF PIZZA

a major inconvenience. A person could spend the majority of his lunch period waiting for a slice of pizza, which he may not even have time to eat. Students towards the end of the line have it the worst—the wait could be ten minutes or even more, which, at BLS, amounts to almost half the lunch period. Although

anticipate such a remarkable turnout, and, even after months of adjusting the numbers, have had difficulty cooking the perfect amount. Nevertheless, Sandra Lowney, one of the lunch servers at Boston Latin School, is very hopeful for the future of Free Pizza Friday. “We really try to make enough. [A few

Boldly Balancing the Budget

By **ALBERT MAO, IV**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

You may think that all Court Street (Boston Public Schools’ headquarters) does is announce snow days; however, as interim superintendent of BPS, John McDonough has many other important issues on his plate. One such issue is money: how to get it, where to get it and how to distribute it.

In this tight economy, his job is to carefully predict the enrollment for the coming academic year and then allocate the correct amount of money to each school. According to the BPS website, “Schools’ budgets are based on who they are educating—not the flat number of students or staff they usually have in the building.” The question is, “Is this good for Boston Latin School?”

BLS is said to be the gem of the BPS system, but this year only \$5,357.17

was spent on average per student—the lowest in all of BPS. A close second and third to the bottom were the other two exam schools, the John D. O’ Bryant school of Math & Science and Boston Latin Academy. The average spending on a student in BPS is \$8,155.

The relatively low per capita allocation to Boston Latin School students may be the reason behind the lack of paper towels, cold classrooms and hot summers, and the need for most of our technology to come from the BLSA. Additionally, it could explain BLS’s overcrowding problem that is illustrated by our long lunch lines, crammed hallways and stairwells. In pursuit of more funding, however, BLS plans to increase enrollment. BLS’s new 2015 budget will be \$13,491,351, a vast majority of which will be spent on personnel and the remaining funds, \$206,000, will be spent on instructional supplies (\$85 dollars per student).

Balancing the budget is no easy feat. For the 2014-2015 budget, McDonough needs to increase teachers’ transportation and health care benefits, and their salaries by three percent, all of which will add up to about \$60 million in rising costs. On top of that, because of budget cuts in the federal government, the Race to the Top grant, which supplied the school system with 31 million dollars this year, will be ending. Additionally, Court Street’s miscalculation in predicting the number of students that would enroll in the 2013-2014 school year (off by 2.7 percent) led to two-thirds of schools receiving more funding than they should have. As less money will be available in the coming year, it is imperative that calculations for allocations be even more precise. In the midst of all these heavy budget cuts, newly elected Mayor Marty Walsh says that he hopes to increase the education budget by 36 million. At

the end of the day, however, the education sector will still take a hit and the superintendent will be forced to make major reductions in many departments.

The financial burdens faced by the school district and school administrations will inevitably trickle down and affect the quality of education. How will the superintendent attract quality teachers to our school system with all these cuts? Where will the principals find the resources to fund improvements in technologies that create the twenty-first century learning experience?

Despite the challenges, John McDonough is confident he will get the job done right. “I also know our school and leadership teams have the capacity to navigate the current challenge successfully so we can continue to serve students well... If I were to sum up this entire letter in one sentence, it would be this... We are all in this together.”

FORUM

A Blizzard of Allegations

By **MINH TRINH, III**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It is time for the Winter Olympic Games yet again. They are going to be held in Sochi, Russia, from February 7 to February 23. The Games are a chance for athletes to flex their muscles, put their training to the test and compete for a chance to realize their dreams for glory and the Olympic gold. It is also a chance for the host country to display its wealth and power; after all, it takes a lot of money to host the Games, build new venues and make improvements to the city.

Corruption also consumes much money. According to Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption activist, Russia has spent a grand total of 51 billion dollars to deliver the Olympics in Sochi, making this the most expensive Olympics ever (despite the fact that there are less athletes competing in the Winter Olympic Games than in the Summer Olympic Games). Navalny claims that Russia has spent at least twice the amount needed to build ten Olympic venues, including the Bolshoi Ice Palace, the Fisht Stadium and the Speed Skating Arena. The Olympic stadium in Sochi expended three times the cost of any other stadium in the world.

Russia’s President, Vladimir Putin, however, flatly denied the allegations, claiming that the Games had cost about 6.5 billion, less than half of

which came from the state treasury. In fact, Putin even challenged those making allegations of corruption to step forward with evidence, stating, “If anyone has concrete data on instances of corruption in implementing the Sochi Olympics Project, we ask

after the Games. Navalny backs up his claims with an interactive website with a map detailing each major item built in Sochi, its price and the price of other similar buildings around the world. There are also similar allegations from former Deputy

allegedly given to Putin’s friends. For example, Arkady Rutenberg, one of Putin’s childhood friends, acquired all the road-building contracts for the Mostotrest Company, of which he owns forty percent.

The company building the Olympic Stadium is also wrapped up in embezzlement charges. The local governor spent 15 million dollars on a helicopter for himself, and Putin spent 15 million dollars on a church with money from the Olympic budget. It is obvious what is happening. Athletes are not the only people who see the Olympics as an opportunity for gold. Businessmen, who “coincidentally” also happen to be friends of Putin, are receiving multiple lucrative contracts for construction of Olympic venues and are being paid an excessive amount of money. This money is coming straight from the taxpayers!

Of course, there is no evidence to support these allegations because all of the documents are conveniently labeled “classified.” Putin and Russia’s government are corrupt, and are using the Olympics as a means of making money. Sadly, no one can do anything to stop them, since there is no evidence. Besides, everyone is more worried about the games themselves and whether or not their country will win medals, than the flagrant corruption happening in Russia.



PROTESTS AGAINST SOCHII OLYMPICS

to furnish us with objective data.... We have not seen any big, large-scale instances of corruption in connection with the Sochi Olympics Project implementation.”

Now, who do we believe, Putin or Navalny? Well, Navalny points out in his report that Putin’s figures cover only expenses directly related to the Olympics, but ignores expenses on local infrastructure. Some of these buildings will be useless

Prime Minister, Boris Nemtsov, and even Kremlin-owned news agencies, all of which arrive at the figure of 50 billion dollars. This is 43 billion dollars more than the cost of the last Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada.

To make matters worse, 96 percent of the money is coming from Russian taxpayers, even though the Kremlin stated that half of the funds would be coming from private investors. Additionally, inflated contracts were

Uncondomable

By **CHRIS KIM, III**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Last Tuesday proved that report card distributions can come with a side of latex. Make no mistake about Boston Latin School’s most recent, ground-breaking policy: the availability of free condoms to its students.

If the policy brought about any immediate effects, they took the form of amused eyebrow raises and laughs of disbelief. For certain, we thought that our curriculum was too rigorous to be bothered by such problems, such as Boston Public School (BPS) committee’s overarching announcement that all 32 high schools under its surveillance will now have condoms available as part of a “wellness policy.” While what future obstacles this “wellness policy” will address is unclear, it is apparent that BPS should exercise greater precaution in its legislation.

Why are condoms even needed in schools, especially in one such as BLS, which boasts an impressively low rate of teen pregnancies? The fact that some schools may struggle with this

problem more than others does not make universal condom availability essential. What the condom availability form boils down to, in essence, is an invasion of privacy—as students solely impacted by this action, we were given no vote, voice or forewarning as to its arrival. The condom availability may even backfire as more students are encouraged to use more condoms.

As of now, BPS will keep its decision. There, however, are economic concerns: how can the school system, running on taxpayer money, afford to dish out an unlimited supply of free condoms? The 2,400 students at BLS only prove to cost a staggering amount of funds.

Lastly, the availability of condoms is logically flawed. Condoms are not 100 percent effective—if a pregnancy results from a defective condom issued by BPS, what happens then? A lawsuit would be likely, amounting to further financial costs for the BPS system and ultimately for taxpayers.

The availability of condoms in the school system is nothing more than an



A SEX ED COURSE IS REQUIRED FOR ACCESS TO CONDOMS

unnecessary distraction to students. It promotes a skewed sense of freedom that America is a place where truly anything is possible, from freedom of speech to freedom of condom access to minors. The mere idea of “free condoms in school” is so ridiculous and laughable that it is difficult to

imagine it being a serious proposal, not to mention the monetary cost it will bring to the already-underfunded school system. While we still have to buy our own school supplies and book covers, fortunately the Boston Public School system has our latex covered for free.

News

Half Days with Late Arrivals a Possibility
Continued from page 1

“I like how if you finish finals early, you can get a half-day because there’s no point in staying,” said Angelica Samonte (IV).

Parents that the *Argo* interviewed voiced concerns about the later commute to school.

“It’s a horrible commute time because there is no rush of the buses and no charter, and it’s an impos-

sible time for parents to drop off,” said Maria Rodrigues, a Brighton resident and mother of a seventh and an eighth grader at BLS. “It would offset the advantage of sleeping in because the transportation would take so much time.”

“It’s too disruptive to the routine, being once every two weeks. Maybe people can adapt, but for working parents I think it’s difficult,” said Ram Rao, Rodrigues’ husband. “I think school should start later

anyway, because teens can’t really function in the morning.”

Many questions about the logistics of the plan are still left unanswered, such as where students will stay if they come to school early and who will monitor them. These kinds of concerns may be raised at the School Parent Council meeting on Tuesday, February 11. At press time it is not clear how many parents will attend. The final vote will be held by the School Site Council, an advisory

body made up of parents and staff, in March.

Even if the proposal does not pass, the mere fact that this is a possibility demonstrates a more progressive Boston Latin School. The half-day is not new to public education, as schools all over the country show. For example, Newton South releases students almost an hour and a half early every Friday.

“I only wish they’d done this earlier,” said Hannah Givertz (I).



The Man For the Job The New Mayor in Town

By **MING YING, III**
FORUM EDITOR

Three weeks ago, I had little idea as to who Marty Walsh, the man behind the black suit, sharp gaze and thickly laden Boston accent, really was. But when he walked through the looming oak door, I had no doubt that he was the man for the job.

It was a meeting at City Hall. Standing briefly in front of us before taking a seat, he had every bit the energy and poise of a mayor. There was something untellable in his glowing expression that made him seem like a friend, and very much a father figure—easy with words, easy-going and even funny. During our introduction, my fellow teen representatives and I circled around the room, offering brief descriptions of ourselves and our work in our communities. The circle ended with Mayor Walsh, who began, “I appreciate all of your work, because all the issues that you brought up are ones that I am working towards. My name is Marty Walsh, and I am trying to figure out how to be the mayor of Boston.”

And become a respectable mayor of Boston he has. Politicians running for office often cast themselves as champions of the working, middle class family, but Walsh’s past lends insight and credibility to that claim. Born and raised in Dorchester, a former alcoholic and a cancer survivor, Walsh is truly someone who has spent his entire life around and understands the concerns of the average

citizen. When asked why he chose to run for mayor, Walsh replied simply, “There’s a homeless man sitting in front of this building,” gesturing out the window, “I’m running because of him.”

If a city is defined anything by its mayor, then we can expect the next four years to be a phase of recovery for the worst of Boston and road to improvement for the best of Boston. Walsh takes his job on a personal level, and in a similar manner connects with the values and needs of Boston residents. His election marked something of a revolution in Boston’s voting history as a record number of former drug and alcohol addicts turned out to support him at the ballot box. Institutionalized people, such as recovering addicts, typically recede in the shadows of society—rarely do they show an interest in politics, and even more rarely are they targeted by campaign trails. Walsh’s astonishing success in rallying even the most underprivileged people behind him serves as a marking point for his inspiring, compassionate role in leadership.

What can Boston expect out of its new mayor? Obstacles loom in the way, to be sure, such as the recent month’s spike in homicides, but against these challenges Boston has found a guiding voice in Walsh. Voters themselves already know that the man they elected for the job will preserve the city and legacy left behind by former Mayor Menino. Now, it is up for the rest of the city to embrace and see.

By **ALICIA ZHANG, III**
STAFF WRITER

It has been less than a month since Mayor Martin J. Walsh has come into office, and already he is facing his first major crisis: nine killings that have occurred in the span of just 19 days. With city polls and activists ready to give the newly appointed mayor the benefit of the doubt that he can achieve what he had promised, as many others are, still more are questioning his actual accomplishments since taking office. As a new mayor, he may lack the confidence and experience necessary for high office.

There is, however, little excuse. This is the job that Walsh signed up for, and now he has to step up and fill his role. Grief and fear are gripping residents and community leaders of the towns where the shootings have occurred, but Walsh is changing little to suppress the gun violence. Fatalities have shot up by 350 percent compared to last year’s records, yet Walsh claims that the shooting rates are actually going down. He even admits that he does not see a point in locking up more gang members, some whom may be directly linked to those homicides. Instead, he wants to focus on providing trauma counseling to shooting victims and their associates so that they do not seek revenge against their shooters.

Despite his reassuring words, this is just Walsh’s way of telling the people of Boston that he is honestly indecisive about any course of action against these shootings. Within the span of the recent

month, Walsh could have already taken action on some of his promises, such as increasing clinical services and working to support at-risk children before they start to carry guns. His promises, however, have yet to materialize.

Walsh’s personal experience with gun violence contradicts his apparent apathy towards the current situation. When he was only 22, Walsh found himself in the middle of a shooting when an errant bullet grazed his left leg on Dorchester Avenue. It was only by pure luck that he was not standing in the path of the bullet. This experience should have reminded him of the importance of gun control and how innocent lives are at risk every day with illegal gun owners rummaging the streets of Boston.

Being mayor is not easy, and many issues remain to be solved. A literal life and death dilemma, however, remains at stake. Walsh had failed to preserve the nine lives that have been taken away, and we can only hope now that these events will spark within him the audacity to create change in gun violence in Boston, as opposed to further rhetoric and placating promises. Even a small action such as funding the aforementioned children’s program or increasing police forces or student partnerships would show Boston residents that Walsh is indeed the man to fight for gun control. Being stationary about this issue, however, will bring him nowhere and will do nothing to prevent more deaths from occurring in Boston. It is time for Marty Walsh to fill the shoes of former Mayor Thomas Menino.

Attack of the Drones

By **STANLEY WONG, I**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Oh, just another anti-drone article? More peace-loving liberal propaganda? No, thank you. Take comfort, tragically misinformed readers, for I will be taking a pro-drone stance. That is, drones should be used for their original purpose: reconnaissance. In a previous issue, you were told that drones would dominate future warfare, make war a video game and take far too many civilian lives. You were encouraged to “think about all the aspects of [drones]” while being supplied with false and oversimplified information. Allow me to inform you.

In case you did not know, drones are high-tech, cheap and hilariously vulnerable unmanned planes. Because of the frequent strikes in Pakistan, Ye-

men and Somalia, it may appear that drones will take care of our marauding adversaries for us in future conflicts. The truth is, however, that it would be a strategic error to use drones in many parts of the world. Drones are so slow and cumbersome that they are now escorted by F-22s and F-15s in the Persian Gulf because they are just that easy to shoot down. If you are wondering what the point is in escorting unmanned planes with manned planes, then you’re on the right track. Additionally, cheap Russian-made SA-18 Igla (anti-air missiles) and F-4s can wreck a bumbling drone any day of the week. It is true that more drones will be integrated in future armies, but they will be playing support and reconnaissance roles. Drones can only be used in locations where we have already defeated the enemy, i.e. not Iran and China (both of which have

tough integrated air defense systems). Weapons of war? I think not.

I build and fly radio-controlled planes in my free time, so I can understand why you probably think piloting a drone is like playing Call of Duty. If piloting drones were like playing a video game, however, Drone-Alert 3 would be the worst performing game of all time. You have to predict the future because the video feed you receive lags so badly. If you experienced the same level of lag in World of Warcraft, angry nerds would rage at you for wiping the raid. Launching a Hellfire missile is nowhere as easy as left-clicking a target. An optics technician has to confirm whether what the drone pilot is seeing is the designated target. Someone countries away then makes the decision to fire, and that does not happen often. Finally, a detailed and lengthy report has to be written. If pilot-

ing a drone still seems like a video game to you, stop reading now.

When it comes to killing terrorists, drones do it best. 3,300 Al Qaeda and Taliban operatives have been killed in Pakistan and Yemen. What about civilian casualties? The Pakistani government, which is never happy about the strikes, reports that only three percent of 2,227 people killed by drones since 2008 were civilians and that since 2012, no civilians have been killed. Also, compared with a 500-pound warhead strapped onto an F-16, the warheads from drones create much smaller, more precise blast zones that reduce collateral damage and casualties. Drones can also loiter above for hours, waiting for the best time to strike and thus reducing the chances that civilians will be caught in the kill zone. In total, drones are far less bloody and more cost effective than other options.

FORUM

Make-Belieb Reasons

By **ANTONIO ARRENDOL, I**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

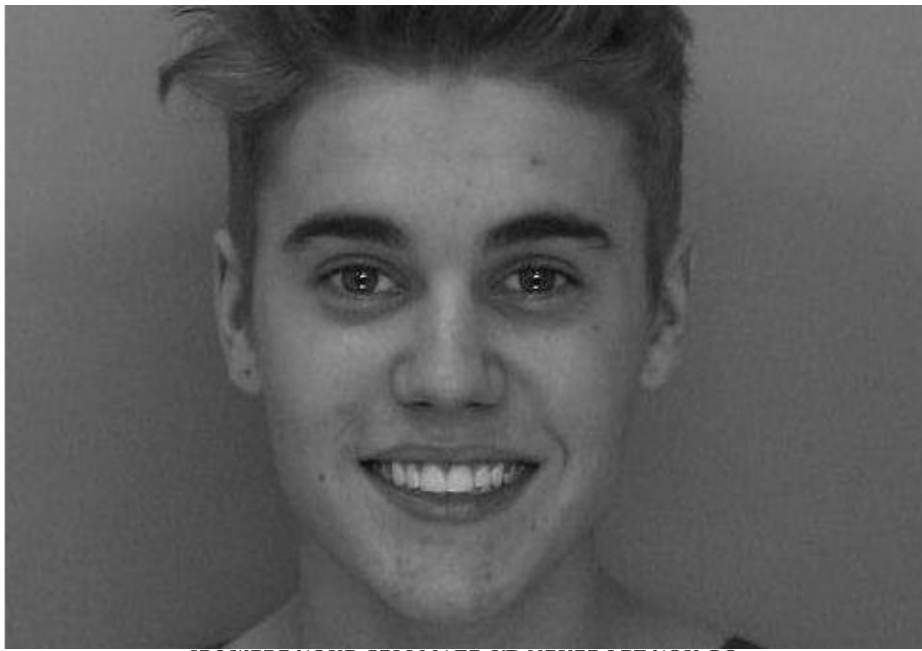
If you live in America, chances are that you hear people discussing the most recent actions of our favorite pop star, Justin Bieber, everywhere. In this age of social media there is no such thing as “bad publicity,” which is lucky for Bieber, considering his latest rash of delinquent activities and scandals. Rich kids, however, have been getting in trouble with the law for a while. So what makes this any different? Well, Bieber’s lawyers are hoping to defend against the charges of disorderly conduct and driving under the influence (of both alcohol and prescription drugs) with a defense that has been catching a lot of heat recently since the recent Ethan Couch case: affluenza. Simply put, “because he’s rich.”

A bit of context: on June 15, 2013, sixteen-year-old Ethan Couch got behind the wheel of a car, a Valium, high and with three times the legal blood alcohol levels for an adult in the state of Texas. While driving thirty miles over the speed limit, he hit and killed four people and permanently paralyzed one more. On December 18, 2013, Ethan was sentenced to “rehabilitation” at the cushy Newport Academy rehabilitation center, complete with massage therapists and state of the art dining. As the filthy, stinking rich son of Fred Couch, owner of Cleburne

Metal Works, Ethan Couch will not be spending a day in prison, unless of course, he somehow finds his way into the driver’s seat in yet another drunken stupor (as are the terms of his parole). What could possibly keep this kid out of juvie, you ask? The same excuse shielding Justin Bieber from the law. Ethan Couch was deemed too rich to understand right from wrong, and it has been ruled that his upbringing in a dysfunctional, wealthy family has “impaired his judgment” to the point where he is no longer responsible for his actions. Yes, this is being taken seriously by the American judicial system, and it is not new to the crime scene.

Affluenza began gaining popularity after the publication of *The Golden Ghetto: The Psychology of Affluence* by therapist Jessie O’Neill in 1997. Now, the “sickness” is gaining traction, as lawyers for the rich and famous mount their defenses from behind apparently-sturdy walls of money. Currently, Justin Bieber is hoping to fight off accusations of drag racing in the streets, driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol and a number of other felonies. If some kid can get off for vehicular manslaughter, what is to stop Bieber or any other rich kid from recklessly endangering us common folk for their not-so-cheap thrills?

You can be sure if either of them had been the children of some



IF I WERE YOUR CELLMATE, I'D NEVER LET YOU GO

bartender or cashier, they’d be facing the full force of the law under which we are all “created equal.” If people could be excused for taking somebody’s life simply because they were not “raised right,” how many killers do you think would be walking the streets, free as Bieber, because their mother did not hug them enough as a kid? At what point does personal accountability come into play for the rich?

You can bet your bottom dollar that any number of kids arrested for theft come from broken households, marred by abuse and hunger, with childhoods far worse off than those of Justin Bieber and Ethan Couch. Yet,

they are condemned to jail because they do not have a big enough bank account to merit pity in the eyes of the law. This sorry excuse for an excuse is making a mockery of our rights as American citizens. Equality under the law means justice to all different people committing any sort of crime, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or socio-economic situation. People like Bieber need to be dealt with the same way the court would deal with any other felon. Maybe then, those with “affluenza” would understand that they are not above the law, and their actions do, in fact, have consequences.

Buying Her Heart

By **EMILY XIE, IV**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It is that time of the year again, the day devoted to love and appreciating loved ones: Valentine’s Day. The eager faces of students from different clubs selling various kinds of merchandise designed to show “love” and “appreciation” toward friends and significant others have grown to be synonymous with Valentine’s Day at Boston Latin School. On the actual day, those who receive many flowers or gifts in homeroom from friends or secret admirers are filled with glee, while those who are not as fortunate are consumed with self-loathing.

From a young age—generally beginning in pre-school—most students in America know that Valentine’s Day is a day for lovers. At the same time, however, these students are taught to give and receive cute little valentine cards and candies. By implementing this strong association of Valentine’s Day, love and giving gifts from such a young age, a new, heavily materialistic society has emerged, filled with people mistakenly believing that love equates giving gifts, and vice versa.

Most first world nations condemn materialism, hypocritically repeating the mantra that “less is more” and that “it’s the thought that counts.” Yet, materialism is so avidly promoted, from the making of valentine-holding bags in elementary school to jewelry commercials as an adult. Not only does this heavy emphasis on gift-giving lead to a distorted vision of love, but it also evokes an unhealthy competitive nature in many people. Children begin in elementary school, comparing who received more val-

entines, or who gave out the nicest valentine cards. Then in high school, people compare who received more carnations in homeroom. Even as an adult, most people in relationships feel it is necessary to give or receive diamond jewelry. If “every kiss begins with Kay,” then does that mean that “affection” now begins with “assets”? Many feel that the idea behind love has begun to get lost amidst all the spending.

Additionally, the large emphasis to purchase gifts for loved ones on Valentine’s Day has begun to mask the original motive behind the day—that is, the supposedly strategic attempt by the Christian church to get rid of the Roman Holiday Lupercalia, observed from February 13 to 15, by stating the need to worship an obscure saint named Valentinus.

Nevertheless, whether the meaning behind the holiday is lost or not, Valentine’s Day is a great economic booster, with a whole industry designated toward the sales of Valentine’s Day goods. In fact, it is estimated that people in America will be spending nineteen billion dollars this year for Valentine’s Day.

This commercialization of Valentine’s Day is more than just an economy boosting, anxiety-inducing (for men) and competitive mood-evoking holiday. It also provides a false sense of idealism for women, as many logically-sound women are filled with fantasies that the image of “true love” on Valentine’s Day is a box of chocolate, roses and jewelry. Everyone says that money cannot buy love or happiness, but from the way society has rapidly changed, it seems as if Valentine’s Day has grown to be an exception.

BLA Loses Its Edge

By **CRYSTAL SUN, IV**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Spots to three exam schools—Boston Latin School (BLS), Boston Latin Academy (BLA) and the O’Bryant—are vied for each year by the top students in Boston. The dreams however, of so many hopeful sixth and eighth graders might come to a screeching halt as talks proceed about turning Boston Latin Academy into a city-wide school—one that does not require taking an exam to enter.

Although no official statements regarding the decision have been made, students from the esteemed exam school have already taken to social media to voice their disapproval. One girl claimed that she had not had a math teacher in months, while others spoke of the English writing class they had to exchange for another study hall. These fundamental issues seem to arise from budget cuts, which translate into laying off teachers and spending only \$4,000 per student at BLA compared to a \$13,000 per student average in other Boston public schools. Other students at BLA attributed the prospect of becoming a non-exam school to the current administrative faculty, which used \$1,000,000 received in funding for the school to pay teachers and renovate the outdoor lawns.

Although I find these reasons to be a huge problem for the students at Boston Latin Academy, I absolutely do not agree that they constitute a conflict great enough to turn such an esteemed school into a district wide school. These reasons are not even a valid excuse for taking such a drastic measure; turning an exam school into a district school will not result in any changes that could not be achieved now. The students of exam schools worked extremely hard

in preparation to take the Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE) and also had to earn a high grade point average. The fruits of their labor were supposed to secure them a more challenging curriculum, along with the opportunity to work with highly capable teachers and an elite student body.

The hard work and dedication students initially put into getting into an exam school is not forgotten as students must perform well to ascend to the next grade. By turning BLA into a non-exam school, students of all capabilities in grades 7-12 can enter the school at any time and learn from the same teachers as students who studied for months to get into the school, which is extremely unfair.

Furthermore, I think that the dynamic of the school also has the potential to be disrupted by kids who enter BLA without any intention to work hard; BLA can definitely count on watching the previous 100 percent of students graduating and attending college go down to a substantially lower number. I find little to no benefit of turning BLA into a district wide school because the funding issue or the administrative issue will not be solved. If anything, BLA will lose its acclaim, and students wishing to seek the same curriculum that previously had been offered there will look to BLS and the O’Bryant. That means that there will be more competition for entrance into an exam school, which ultimately leads to more rejections of kids seeking a higher level of education in the city of Boston.

Finally, keeping in mind the possibility that at any time our own school could learn from BLA’s potential example and turn into a non-exam school, I truly advocate against the idea of turning Boston Latin Academy into a district-wide school.

FORUM

Should Marijuana Be Legalized?



Pro

By **GEORGE HUYNH, I**
STAFF WRITER

Cannabis. Pot. Weed. Mary Jane. The drug more commonly known as marijuana is finally being legalized in the United States. Beginning January 1 of this year, the states of Washington and Colorado made marijuana available for purchase to adults 21 years and older, granting licenses to dozens of venues. With a special sales tax of 10 percent in Colorado, the government will be making up to 40 dollars for every ounce of marijuana sold. Now, not only will the government be able to raise billions of dollars with taxes, they will be able to significantly reduce the 25.6 billion dollars going towards the National Drug Control Policy. In reducing money used to prosecute offenders, the U.S. will more efficiently allocate law enforcement and prison resources to handle more serious criminals, and moreover, to minimize the incentive for illegal drug trafficking.

Do not be fooled, however: decriminalization is not the same thing. Whereas decriminalization removes civil fines and instead encourages drug education or treatment, legalization would completely drop all these implications, making marijuana available for practically unbarred possession and use. The arrests against these minor offenders are a waste of officers’ time, and these monetary fines are miniscule to the billions in revenue the government could be earning from marijuana sale taxes.

Contrary to expectation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found in a 2011 study that youth marijuana usage in Colorado actually went down by 2.8 percent to 22 percent (below the national average of 23.1 percent) after marijuana’s decriminalization. Availability of drugs on school grounds also decreased by 5 percent to 17.2 percent—8.4 points below the national average of 25.6 percent. There is less incentive for street dealers to provide to minors, as they probably will not be able to produce at the same level as or at a lower price than licensed retailers. With an age minimum of 21 years, teens are now restricted from obtaining marijuana, and most find that it is harder to acquire booze than weed. Dispel the gateway drug theory now, for marijuana users fully acknowledge the risk of more harmful drugs and use marijuana because it is safer.

The effects of marijuana are harmless compared to the effects of alcohol. Alcohol, however, a ubiquitous beverage available in countless countries, is directly responsible for almost 90,000 deaths a year—from conditions like heart disease to car accidents caused by impaired judgment. Drunk drivers constantly put pedestrians and other drivers in danger because of the choices they make, but even that will not force the government to ban liquor (as if it ever worked in the past).

On the other hand, marijuana only affects the smoker. It serves as a social lubricant, a painkiller and stimulator much like alcohol, but comes with fewer risks. There are many sensible uses for medical marijuana. Students with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) use this drug in order to focus better, as it increases perception and enhances memory while calming the body. In addition, marijuana is often prescribed in states that have made medical marijuana legal to treat muscle spasticity and to alleviate illnesses such as nausea, migraines and insomnia, whereas liquor truly does not have any medical purpose. Meanwhile, users achieve a “high,” a feeling of happiness and well-being, with small side effects such as bloodshot eyes and distortion of time. And get this—out of the 38,329 deaths caused by drug overdose in 2010, NONE of them were caused by marijuana, because one would have to smoke up to 40,000 times the amount of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in one joint to overdose.

With 9 states having approved legal medical marijuana, 6 states having decriminalized marijuana and 7 states, including Massachusetts, having done both, the next step is for the federal government to side with Colorado and Washington. In retrospect, the U.S. will view marijuana’s ban as extremely foolish, just like the Prohibition of the early 1900s, as the government stumbles out of stubborn tradition and toward obvious practicality.

Con

By **KEVIN ZHU, I**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Let me begin by stating for the record that my quarrel is not with those who have medical conditions and can only turn to marijuana for pain relief. I am aware that there are those rare cases of people who can not use traditional painkillers and that is fine. My qualm is with those selfish potheads who are only interested in getting their “high” while endangering the public and contributing to the downfall of the American people.

Usage of marijuana is unfortunately widespread. Most of us Americans by now probably know somebody who has at least tried the substance. It is, in fact, something our own beloved airhead-in-chief has partaken in. Any serious criminal punishment would be both difficult to enforce and disproportionate. There is, however, a notable difference between decriminalizing marijuana and legalizing it. By only decriminalizing marijuana we have saved ourselves the effort of harshly punishing the many people who make the mistake of consuming marijuana while also condemning the usage of it. In 1979, it was found that 13.2 percent of the people surveyed had used marijuana within 30 days of the survey. By 2008, that figure was 6.1 percent. This reduction in usage is a reflection of the success of anti-marijuana laws. By legalizing marijuana, it becomes not only more available, and also socially acceptable. People will always break the law, but that does not mean that laws should not exist.

In regards to public safety, marijuana should not be thrown into the mix of available substances that can impair judgment and create public danger. More than 100,000 people die annually from alcohol related incidents, and more than three times as many are killed in firearm related incidents. More than 43,000 of these deaths were drunk driving incidents. We have enough problems with the disgusting murderers who endanger the public by driving under the influence of legal substances. Making marijuana legal would only serve to increase usage and therefore increase incidents caused by people who drive under the influence and endanger the lives of those around them. Those who believe that marijuana will not be an issue to public safety are merely selfish burdens to society who care more about their highs than about the lives of those killed in easily preventable accidents.

The assertion that marijuana is less dangerous than alcohol or tobacco is less a vindication of marijuana usage than it is an indictment of alcohol and tobacco usage. Like tobacco, marijuana is often smoked. It is not the substance, but the smoke itself that causes cancer. Similar to alcohol, marijuana impairs judgment and stunts mental development in young adults. Long term, it would better serve our interests if many of our delinquent teenagers and young adults were not being encouraged to kill what few brain cells they have left.

Contrary to popular belief, marijuana is highly addictive. It would not have come to be the most used illegal drug in the country if the users could have stopped any time they wanted to. Legalizing marijuana would only exacerbate the issue of marijuana addiction by making it too easily available. Furthermore, just as big tobacco has made cigarettes far more addictive with copious amounts of chemical engineering, national marijuana corporations would also set to work making marijuana more and more potent.

Any revenue gained by taxing marijuana is subverted by the social cost of increased consumption. Legalization of marijuana would cost the taxpayer far more by straining the budgets of government funded rehabilitation centers, emergency rooms and the healthcare industry in general. Additionally, one must also consider the costs of traffic incidents and the loss of potential from high school dropouts.

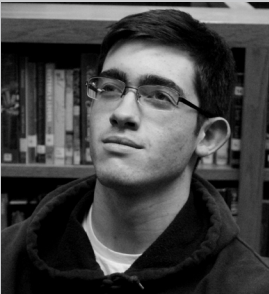
In the interest of public health, we as a society should be doing everything we can to keep people from using marijuana while also helping those who are already addicted.

I believe that, in all likelihood, marijuana will be legalized. I also believe that it will undoubtedly be a step in the wrong direction.

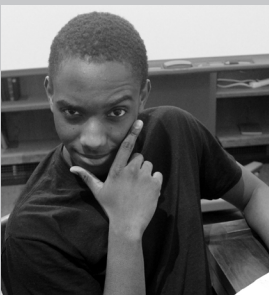
Forum Question
Should Marijuana Be Legalized?



No, it shouldn’t be legalized because the smell is repulsive and it is a gateway drug to more illicit substances.
-Kenneth Cruz, I



Yes, because everyone needs to chill.
-Brian O’Dowd, II



No, because the government made it illegal to better maintain peoples’ health.
-Marc Pierre, III



No, because it makes people do stupid and careless things.
-Gerard Delmar, IV



Yes, if it’s medical marijuana, because it can help people. If just for recreational use, no.
-Peninah Hodin, V



Yes, because it can help soothe people’s pain and stress.
-Andrew Huynh, VI

Spotlight

Alex Cassesso



By OWEN WARD, I
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When your father is Ron Cassesso, and your mother is the greatest Italian cook this side of the Mediterranean, you know you’re destined for greatness. His kingdom stretches from Billings Field to the WRCC to a small section of D Street in Southie. Some know him as the “Wolf of Avenue Louis Pasteur,” some simply as Nacho (dumbest nickname ever, but whatever) — but most know him as the “King of Instagram”, wielder of the self-stirring mug, the one who took off his shirt at the hypnotist show (90% sure he wasn’t hypnotized when he did that) and the kid every 8th grade girl crushes on or the kid who crushes on every 8th grade girl. I’m here to show you the real man behind these myths and legends. I’ll take you back to a better time when he wore jean shorts, Jordans and a beat Georgia bulldogs hat.

I first met Alex when he joined the soccer team. Our first words to each other would form an iconic bond that would last for years to come: “Hey, do you think ----- is hot?” And from then on, we were boys. Whether spooning in his attic while watching Friends With Benefits, traveling to Southie, or finding \$1500 on the ground — we’ve been inseparable. He’s the Zac Efron to my Vanessa Hudgens, the Kanye to my Kim and the Karl Marx to my Communist Manifesto. Alex has always been there for me, and he’s the best friend I’ve ever had. Sure, he has his faults — he fixes his hair too much, he spends hours in front of the mirror, he thinks every girl is obsessed with him and he is convinced he’s Ben Affleck from The Town. None of these faults, however, overshadow how awesome he really is. Alex is one of the most loyal, caring and nice people you’ll ever meet. He would do anything for his friends and family, always going out of his way to talk to new people or younger kids to make them feel comfortable. He holds a slight 3.5 GPA and is filthy at soccer. The kid’s the full package! His family has adopted me and my family has adopted him. We’ve been through so many fights, girls, soccer games and COD sessions that I don’t know what I’d do without him.

Even though the hats on his head have changed from the Bulldogs to Polo (angled slightly to the right) to Nike Dri Fit, Alex Cassesso has always been the same amazing person with a great sense of self. He still has to live up to the reputation of Ron “the Don,” but I know Alex will do great things in life. He’s going to major in business, find an amazing Italian wife who can cook almost as well as Mrs. Cassesso and live out the rest of his life in Westie, forever Instagramming hipster pictures of Billings field.

A&E

Burrito Wars

By EMILY XIE, IV
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Since its birth in the late twentieth century, Mexican cuisine has firmly established itself as a staple of American dining. Recently, however, the casual atmosphere and low prices that often accompany Mexican food has allowed it to manifest into a popular after school snack among students who have scavenged high and low throughout Boston for the best burrito. With Boloco, a New England Mexican food chain, only a block away from school, Boston Latin School students have easy access to their choice of tortilla, meats and fillings galore. Many students, in fact, have continually relied on Boloco, due to their variety of flavors and options as well as convenient location, to satiate their craving for burritos. Do quantity and convenience however, equate quality? With so many places—ranging from local, family-owned establishments to well-known restaurant chains—where should a BLS student go to for a quality burrito?

My mission to find the best burrito in Boston began at BLS. After polling 70 students, I found that the top three contenders for Boston’s best burrito were Chipotle, Boloco and Anna’s Taqueria, with 27 votes, 18 votes, and 12 votes respectively.

Determined to uncover what made these three venues the ideal burrito destination, I surveyed my peers, beginning with the wisdom and knowledge of Henry Tsang (I) who stated, “Their [Chipotle’s] rice is a lot nicer than what other burrito places serve, and they also stuff your burrito to the maximum.”

Conflict arose when I corresponded with two members of Class II. In

response to her friend’s support for Boloco, Chereese Shaw (II) reiterated Tsang’s earlier rhetoric, “Even though Boloco has a lot of mix and combos, Chipotle is a Mexican grill that adds a classic spice to their burrito which gives it that Latin taste.” I also found that most of the support that Boloco received was, indeed, due to the large variety of burrito options on their menu.

Anna’s Taqueria also finished strong with very loyal supporters. When asked why Anna’s was better than other Boston Mexican restaurants, Maya Grealley (IV) and Kaya Riker (IV), seemed at a loss as to how to respond. They explained that there were no words that could truly describe “Anna’s.” “It’s just so delicious,” one said, while the other interjected, “Their [Anna’s] burritos are hella dope.”

But, not all Boston Latin students are in favor of Mexican restaurant chains. James Coakley (IV), who believes that Purple Cactus, a Jamaica Plain Mexican eatery, has the best burritos, explained when asked why, “They put a lot of good cheese in [their burritos]. Whether rain or shine, Purple Cactus is where my heart belongs.” Nathan Oalican (IV) firmly rejected the commercially successful establishments’ burritos. Responding to those who supported Chipotle or Boloco, Oalican stated, “You all are unversed in the art of the burrito. Most chain burrito places are just gross. Chipotle and Boloco can’t even compare to real burritos. Their rice tasted like reheated microwave cardboard. Romano’s [Pizzeria and Taqueria] in Roslindale hands down, best burritos I’ve tried thus far in Boston.”

After speaking with my peers, I decided it was time to try the burritos that they were praising so heav-

ily and make my own judgments. By the end of my tasting, I had eaten a burrito from Boloco, Chipotle, Anna’s Taqueria and the Purple Cactus. In order to keep the verdict fair, I ordered the same burrito from each restaurant: chicken, rice, beans and salsa. After some serious evaluating, I have concluded that Anna’s Taqueria’s burritos are far superior to its competitors. The rice-to-bean ratio was relatively high, and their ingredients were fresh and delicious. Purple Cactus also used good quality fillings, but the rice to bean ratio was fairly low, making the beans quite overpowering. I will agree with my peers that Chipotle’s burrito was certainly loaded to the max, and there truly was some “spice” inside of it as Chereese Shaw (II) had mentioned. I found that Boloco’s appeal however, comes mostly from the variety in its menu, for the burritos themselves were fairly mediocre. I will say, however, that none of the burritos tasted horrendous, which made my study all the more difficult.

Often times the difference between a burrito-lover and a burrito-hater lies simply in finding the right place to purchase that perfect burrito from. For those who like a heavily stuffed burrito and some spice, Chipotle is ideal. But, for those who prefer a higher rice to bean ratio, Anna’s Taqueria is the place to go. And if you are into fresh ingredients and love a good ole black bean then Purple Cactus just may be the location of your favorite burrito. Whatever is your preference, there is no shortage of sensational burrito establishments in this fine city. And hey, if you are yet to find the place that meets your every desire then try a taco because burritos might just not be for you.

Art Spotlight

Deirdre Newell

By ALLIE KENNELLY, I
A&E EDITOR

What can we say about Deirdre Newell? What can’t we say? That is the better question. Many of you know that she is an extraordinary painter of nails, always coming up with new designs and color schemes and testing them out on herself. Did you also know, however, that her talent for nail art translates onto paper? Indeed, Deirdre is also an exceptional illustrator and painter—an

overall artist.

After electing to take Fundamentals of Art her junior year, Deirdre found that she quite enjoyed being able to try out all different mediums of art.

“I took AP Art because I’ve always liked art classes and how they’re not as structured as most of the classes at BLS. I love being able to have a class where for the most part I got to decide what to do. AP gives you even more freedom for that and getting AP credit for something I already like do-

ing makes it even better. I definitely think more people should look into art classes and even just walk through the art wing because the stuff you’ll see is amazing.”

Now that I’ve taken a walk through the art wing and seen some of Deirdre’s art personally, I felt that it was only fair to share it with the rest of you. Deirdre selected three pieces that she completed this year in AP Art and spoke to me briefly about what they each mean to her.



“The first two paintings are watercolor with micron pen and they’re a part of my concentration. The concentration is 12 pieces that have to do with a central theme, and mine is how growing up in Boston has made me more independent. I tried to pick some well known landmarks and also played around with the out-of-frame buildings to give it more of an emphasis in the painting.”

“[This] piece is something the AP class did for MassArt which was really fun to do. We each chose a picture of ourselves and blew it up and did the line work with india ink. The point of it was to look realistic but also more fluid and quick. For the background I picked the really neon pinks and yellows and splattered blue because the contrast makes it look 3D, and it stands out from the black and white image.”



10 Trends that Men Hate (But Women Love)

By Vivian Herbert, III
Contributing Writer

We have all seen the magazine by-line before; a bold statement followed by an article detailing why you should not break out your new peplum top on your next date. It reminds men of “maternity wear” and makes them uncomfortable.

There has been a recent trend in fashion lately regarding what clothing means to men and women. All one needs to do is scroll through the satirical fashion blog, “The Man Repeller,” in order to comprehend the full extent of this wardrobe war. The real questions are though, what are some of these evil ensembles, and why are these articles an issue?

Let us start with the harem pants. Harem pants are a type of long and baggy trousers, which taper at the ankle. Often referred to as “stylish sweatpants,” it is no wonder that they have exploded as a trend over the past few months. Their elastic waists provide comfort, while their commonly patterned fabrics help liven up any outfit. Also, as an added bonus, they possess the ability to be easily transformed from a day to night look, with the addition of high heels or a fancy blouse. They are not, however, popular with everyone. Some find their breezy fabrics reminiscent of “hammer pants” and have to fight the urge to mumble popular 90’s rap songs under their breath as folks wearing them pass by.

Another frontrunner on the fashion scene that seems to have been met by

a mixed reaction is the trend of high-waisted clothing. For many women, high-waisted jeans and shorts act as the ultimate form-flattering apparel, focusing attention to the waist and accentuating curves. They also allow you to continue rocking those early summer crop tops year round, and who doesn’t love getting the most bang for their buck? Whether worn with a tucked-in sweater, or an old oversized t-shirt, these pants possess the 90’s “couldn’t care less” style that you see



HIGH WASTED SHORTS AND A BAGGY SWEATER AS FEATURED ABOVE

on every twenty-year-old hipster at your local Starbucks. Although you know that it seems a little pretentious, you can not fight the desire to listen to the Smiths and put on sky-high acid wash denim. There are only two words holding you back from achieving your “Saved By the Bell” self-actualization—“Mom” jeans. Certain people do not find these types of pants attractive, due to the fact that they swear they have seen the same ones worn by a forty-year-old woman in an afterschool special.

Rounding out the cult-clothing list is the oversized sweater. After Mackl-

emore’s “Thrift Shop” managed to top radio charts week after week, Goodwill flooded with teens looking for something that resembled their “grandpa’s style.” Enter ironic 80s knits. Despite the fact that they are dubbed “ugly sweaters,” these pullovers possess major charm. They have the warmth of your usual old sweatshirt, but you still feel like you are making a statement even on the below zero temperature days. Complete with psychedelic patterns, sometimes it is hard to tell if your new sweater was made from the same fabric that they use to upholster the orange line train seats. That, however, usually becomes the last of your worries as you watch all eyes admire the red and blue checkerboard print. Is it too retro for a few people’s tastes? That is for sure. Some find it a little less fresh (Prince) and a little too Cosby Show for their liking.

One of the best things about fashion is that it is a form of self-expression. Like your taste in music or movies, not everyone is going to like it, but it should always be your choice. That is the main issue with articles like these. Instead of bashing people for thinking outside the box, they transform clothing into something that should be worn for the benefit of others. In reality though, you should never be afraid to wear what makes you happy. There is a quote from Iris Apfel, whose eclectic wardrobe was an exhibition at the Met. It reads, “When you don’t dress like everybody else, you don’t have to think like everybody else.” So think for yourself, and wear that daring pair of floral leggings. It’s what Iris would want.

The Oscar Predictions

By Malcolm DC Ekman, II
Contributing Writer

As the Academy Awards are fast approaching, it is time to call your bookie and start placing your bets because it has been a very interesting year for American cinema. Early on, it seemed as if it was going to be another year of few cinematic gems, but that notion was disproved when *Gravity* became the year’s first contender. Minimal advertising and an intense word-of-mouth campaign brought the film, which relied mainly on high-definition and realistic visual effects, to a large audience.

Soon after, *Captain Phillips* stunned viewers with its captivating and dramatic standoffs that had moviegoers leaning on the edge of their seats throughout the film. A dark horse contender for best supporting actor also arose from the film: a former taxi driver, Barkhad Abdi, played the tormented and torn Somali pirate who abducts a New England shipping captain portrayed by Oscar veteran, Tom Hanks.

Later in the year, a slew of new films arrived, each competing for spots on the Academy’s ballots. Debuting at Cannes, Alexander Payne’s black-and-white indie film, *Nebraska*, and the Coen brothers’ ode to the 1960’s Greenwich Village scene, *Inside Llewyn*

Davis, both saw critical success, with Davis winning the Grand Prix. Sadly, the films have not made a substantial impact in American box offices.

Next came the tearjerkers, *12 Years a Slave* and *Dallas Buyers Club*. Although these films represent the stereotypical Oscar-winning crowd, they were incredibly successful both critically and commercially. *Dallas Buyers Club*’s tale of a homophobic cowboy-turned-AIDS-

each member of the all-star cast, the film as a whole, however, left many viewers unsatisfied. *Wolf of Wall Street*, Scorsese’s newest catalyst for Leonardo DiCaprio to play a troubled tycoon, was received negatively by critics, especially given obvious similarities to Baz Luhrmann’s adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, which also starred DiCaprio in a similar role. The last of these final three films was Spike Jonze’s *Her*. Initially pegged as a niche independent comedy, the film was overlooked when it came to award season predictions. The film, however, which depicts the deeply visceral and emotional relationship between a man and his dream woman, has been captivating each viewer who ventures forth into its provocative embrace.

When contemplating your Oscar predictions, you must take into account the kind of film that usually wins Best Picture. Out of the nominated movies, the only films that have been both critically and commercially lauded in addition to fitting the overall criterion for Best Picture are *American Hustle*, *12 Years a Slave* and *Her*. If the Academy still cares more about excellence in cinematic achievement, then my money is on *Her*. If it wants to please crowds, however, the Academy will choose *American Hustle* or *12 Years a Slave*. The ball’s in its court.



MOVIES NOMINATED FOR BEST PICTURE

activist helped Matthew McConaughey and co-star Jared Leto win dramatic acting awards at the 2014 Emmy’s.

As the year neared its end, three new films were released into the Oscar pool. *American Hustle*, which is basically *Argo* meets *Silver Linings Playbook* in the eyes of the Academy, was very successful and became the immediate Oscar darling. Despite great performances from

Spotlight Mariel Rice



By Arielle Goldhaber, I
Contributing Writer

Who are those two girls attached at the hip walking down the hallway? Wow, they’re like the same exact person! I wonder if they’re related. I wonder if they’re dating.

Even though we are getting married in the future, I’m sorry to say that Mariel Rice and I are not related or dating (and we are definitely not the same person). In fact, I’d have to say that Mariel Rice is my better half and a better person. You may not be able to see her in the hallways if you’re taller than five feet, but her smile makes up for what she lacks in height. This seemingly quiet vegetarian is not all what she appears to be. Beyond her incredible fashion sense and beautiful long hair, she has the power to change your entire day, if not your entire life. Before I met Mariel, I was just an awkward white girl—and I still am now—but she gave me confidence and laughed at all of my dumb jokes, which made me who I am today.

It started early when we sat next to each other in Mr. Brownell’s Latin class in eighth grade. She is the only one who still takes me to see him because I turn bright red and hyperventilate every time. Since then she’s been through it all—boyfriends, breakups, television marathons, drag queens, accidental butt touches, kittens, baking and excessive eating of dumplings. Through every cup of coffee and tea, she has made me a better person. She taught me that it’s okay to stay in on a Friday night and do nothing but chat. She taught me that being a good friend means balancing both friends and boyfriends. And she taught me that it’s necessary to get feelings off of your chest instead of saying nothing. But even after spending so much time with Mariel, one thing I will never understand is how she manages to be so selfless. Sure, I carry her coffee mug once in a while (actually a lot), but she takes being selfless to another level. Her dedication to friends, her patience with my boyfriends and the way she makes food to help me feel better only scratches the surface of how incredible this young woman is. The beginning of senior year was a bit rough and I had to sit back and watch the love of my life (Mariel, of course) be unhappy. If you’ve ever known a true friendship, you’d know how hard it is to do nothing. But Mariel Rice is a strong independent woman who don’t need no man—and she deserves the best of life. So forget all the haters, baby, because you’re an amazing human being.

For anyone who can relate, we all know that college is going to test our friendships and push us to try even harder. We’ll miss our cats and our families, but I refuse to miss you, Mariel. Because I promise I will always be there, like you’ve always been for me. I love you, Merl! Even if you don’t text me back.

Big Apple State of Mind

By CHARLES VADALA, II
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The crisp February wind blew through my afro pell-mell as I strolled down the crowded streets of the Big Apple. Alongside my comrades from the Boston Latin School (BLS) Big Band, the group pinballed from restaurant to restaurant, thrift shop to thrift shop. The folks of New York had no idea what was about to hit them.

The year was 2013. The occasion was the annual Charles Mingus High School Jazz Festival and Competition. Each year the BLS Big Band submits recordings of Charles Mingus charts as an audition for the festival. Three bands in each category are accepted and a competition is held at the Manhattan School of Music in mid-February. Last year we were accepted and we made the long trip down to New York City.

As part of our Mingus experience, we participated in clinics, attended performances and performed on stage at the Manhattan School of Music. The first clinic was led by tenor saxophonist Walter Blanding, who spoke of getting a good sound out of your instrument and listening to the people you're playing with. In the middle of this clinic, we received a surprise visit from jazz legend and amazing trumpet player, Wynton Marsalis, swaggered out from his bowtie to his boots. The second clinic was lead by the Mingus Dynasty group, who spoke to us about the importance of listening and communicating within the context of a jazz group.

Our performance for the competition went swimmingly and we won first place! Willens Jean-Jules ('13) won



BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL 2014 BIG BAND

an outstanding soloist award. When I asked Daniel "D-Piece" Winshall, BLS dropout and big band alumnus, about his experience in the Mingus trip last year he said, "[G]etting to play Mingus's bass was scrumptiously delicious. The trip also provided me with my first personal experience with Wynton Marsalis who has become a mentor to me. All in all, the amazing trip to the Big Apple changed my perception of African American music."

In early January this year, the BLS Big Band received news that we were accepted yet again into the festival. On Valentine's Day we will head to New York to defend our title. Our recent acceptance gave me flashbacks to last year: kicking hot freestyles on the bus to New York, kicking hot freestyles into the wee small hours of the morning in our Holiday Inn Express® hotel room and, of course, kicking hot freestyles on the bus ride home. The members of the Big Band are ecstatic to be returning to the Big Apple.

Leading the BLS Big Band's trombone section is the charismatic Daniel "Theodore" Hines (I). Hines said, "It is truly amazing that we get to participate two years in a row. It is something that I never thought I would be able to do...twice!" This year, the Big Band will be featuring vocalist Erin "Rin-Rin" Vadala (VI), member of the prestigious Vadala family. When asked about the upcoming performance, she said, "I look forward to embarking upon this majestic journey to the resplendent city of New York." At 12 years old, she will be the youngest ever participant in the Mingus Festival. Holding down the groove is Robert "Cheddar Rob" Carney (I) on the drums. Robert looks forward to "Drop[ping] some fat beats as BLS Big Band joins the likes of Frank Sinatra and Jay-Z as kings of New York City."

Lead by Mr. Paul J. Pitts, the band will be playing "Song With Orange," "Pedal Point Blues" and "Goodbye Porkpie Hat" in hopes of repeating their title.

Spotlight Natalie Fiorenzo



By MAGGIE MULLIGAN, I
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I've known Natalie since her days of rocking Converse and turtle-necks. Yes, you read that correctly. But she's come a long way since then. Well...I guess you could say that.

After knowing Natalie for over 15 years, I still have absolutely no idea what to expect from her on a day-to-day basis. Literally no clue. I'm talking about a girl who has been absent 300 days over the course of her high school career. A girl who, in all seriousness, once asked us to "take a candid" picture of her. A girl who occasionally sleeps with sunglasses on in her bed because she is too lazy to get up and turn off the light. And no one can forget about the time she got censured on December 21, 2012 (the predicted end of the world) for writing "Dooms Day" on a pass. The school took it as a bomb threat.

If you've ever gotten the chance to talk to Natalie, she's probably brought up Christmas or woven a quote from the Grinch into the conversation. She loves the Christmas season so much that she even dyed her hair red! You also probably stood in wonder trying to figure out if she really just pronounced "leg" with a New York accent, if she really just ordered a burrito with sautéed vegetables instead of rice, if she's really still reading Crime and Punishment and if she really only figured out how to pronounce her last name a year ago.

Natalie lives on the wild side. She is constantly roaming, rarely ever sleeping at her own house. She does things her own way. If you ever have a task that involves leaving your shame at the door, ask Natalie to help you with it. Overall, however, she is a hard worker. She gets excellent grades, keeps a job and basically runs her own household. She even made it to sectionals for swimming the breast-stroke this year!

Although she may seem like she always knows what she's doing, she still asks herself important life questions that any ordinary person would ask: where will she go to college? What does she want to study? Where does she want to live? When is the appropriate time to ask Peter Honzik (II) for the pictures from junior prom?

I would HIGHLY advise getting to know Natalie before she leaves Boston Latin School. She is always looking to make new friends, so don't be shy to say hi, give her a wave or call her Fatalie (she loves that—I mean, who wouldn't?). I could go on and on about how bittersweet it is to see Natalie getting ready for the next part of her life, but I'll keep it short. She's my Rocky Horror-watching, Bruce Springsteen-singing, puppy-loving best friend—forever and always.

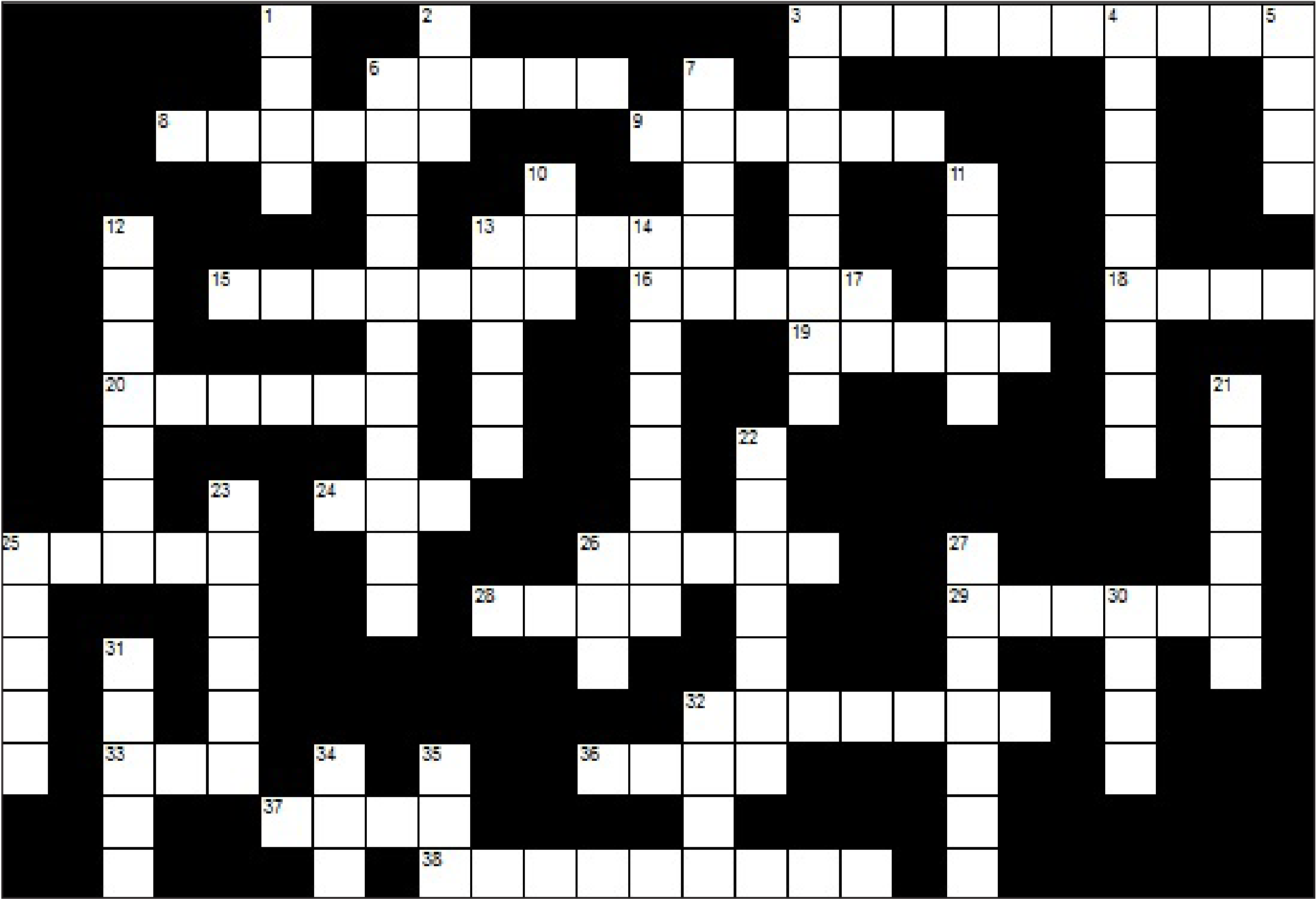
Beside the Tombstone of Television

By MALCOLM DC EKMAN, II
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A recent episode of Fox Extended's "Always Sunny in Philadelphia" illustrated, through a cleverly "meta" scenario, the current state of broadcast television and the show's subsequent rejection of said status quo. In the episode, "the gang" at Paddy's Pub visits a rival bar, which has inexplicably won "best bar" for the past few years. They are met with tawdry romances, cheap laughs and bright colors. It's comforting, it's light, you could even venture to say that it's entertaining, but it is in no way deserving of said recognition. The bar, of course, represented the slew of current broadcast television shows, such as "Modern Family," "New Girl" and "The Mindy Project," that have appeared in the past few years and have found their places for the public assassination of broadcast television. Each week, millions of Americans tune in to National Broadcasting Company (NBC), Fox Broadcasting Company (FOX), CBS Broadcasting (CBS) and American Broadcasting Company (ABC) to see the most pandering and uncreative dreck that can be filmed without breaking the high-definition intensely saturated cameras that they use. What has happened to the rich and diverse history of broadcast television? Broadcast comedy and drama have acted as an escape for many members of the public for decades. The sitcom, in particular, has served as a proverbial

piece of pie for television watchers throughout the years. Sitcoms allow viewers to sit down and experience familiar and comforting worlds filled with the characters they love without having to leave the safe and lax clutches of their couches at home. In recent years, however, basic cable has become not only homogeneous, but has also rapidly declined in quality, and if you were to turn to any of those channels, you would find a rather rancid puddle of said pie. This is what critics are calling the "dark ages" of broadcast television. NBC, a company which used to be regarded as the leader in broadcast comedy has produced and then promptly canceled 18 failed sitcoms in the last two years alone. ABC is in second place with 15 canceled sitcoms, followed by Fox with 12 and finally CBS with six. Despite these surprisingly large numbers for such a specific portion of each channel's programming, those statistics still fail to account for the many terrible shows currently being aired, many of which are also awaiting cancellation. So what has happened in the past few years that sparked this influx and subsequent exodus of programming? It was only 2010 when NBC experienced a wave of comic success with an all-star lineup of sitcoms: "30 Rock," "Parks & Recreation," "Community" and "The Office." Although they had seen similar numbers during the "Friends" to "Seinfeld" era, this amount of concentrated ratings gold was unprecedented. Meanwhile, ABC and FOX competed for dramatic

reign with shows such as "Lost" and "House," while CBS remained the sad little brother of broadcast television, but this relative harmony would soon come to an end. Before the 2013 season, NBC cancelled nine of its 11 comedies in an effort to "broaden its comedy lineup." All throughout broadcast television, similar initiatives aimed toward audience diversification were trampling on comedic and dramatic integrity in order to garner a wider viewership. Shows started popping up that revolved around stereotypes, cheap laughs and washed up former stars' sad attempts at prolonged fame. Subsequently, shows of incredibly poor quality have been airing and then are being immediately canceled due to low ratings. It seems as if the television executives are playing Whack-A-Mole with target audiences, and instead of concentrating on where quality shows and viewers are actually appearing, they just act like a drunk twenty-something-year-old, banging on every hole at once in a fruitless attempt to win a stuffed Spongebob for his unimpressed girlfriend, destroying every good show they had left in the process. When a video is loading slowly, you can either frustratedly click "play" when it freezes every two seconds and not understand or enjoy anything in the video, or you can get up, fix yourself a cup of ginger ale and return to a fully loaded video. This Russian roulette-esque technique of program development is slowly destroying the programs we once loved.



Across

3. Largest landlocked country, Borat home country
6. New CEO of General Motors
8. Spot of the 2014 World Cup
9. Woody’s ever faithful dog
13. Vladamir Putin’s fave vacation spot
15. President who passed the Voting Rights Act
16. Leader of the Keebler elves
18. “One of my followers”
19. Flour Bakery founder Joanne
20. Gossip Girl’s “it girl”
24. Ms. Elliott’s favorite subject
25. Country south of China, aka Myanmar
26. Leader of the Teen Titans
28. Ancient form of slavery and modern sport
29. Oscar the grouch’s original color
32. First winner of Super Bowl
33. Northeastern US college athletic conference
36. Mountain range in Russia
37. University in Texas; popular staple food
38. Only president to serve two non-consecutive terms

Down

1. Islamic leadership position
2. 2001: A Space Odyssey antagonist
3. Whom Macklemore apologized to after the Grammys
4. Word that Beyoncé mispronounces
5. Table salt chemical formula
6. Famous island for nuclear testing in the 1940s
7. UK Prime Minister at the turn of the century
10. Mad Men’s Draper
11. Johnny’s best friend in Ed, Edd n Eddy
12. Pokemon #002
13. Bulgaria capital
14. London airport
17. The earth without art is just ____
21. Quiz, to the science dept.
22. Singer-songwriter of “White & Nerdy”
23. Street Fenway is located on
25. Desert or Bean, in fashion
- 26.Lady in ____
27. Popular trivia and geography quiz site
30. Smallest species of deer
31. Super Bowl MVP
32. “Temperature” singer Sean
34. Moving image with debated pronunciation
35. BLS public speaking, abbr.

Horoscopes

Aquarius January 20 - February 18: Ravioli, ravioli give me the formioli.

Pisces February 19 - March 20: Go ahead and check SIS for the 8th time, nothing has changed.

Aries March 21 - April 19: Go to the aquarium, don’t be lame.

Taurus April 20 - May 20: You really should have recycled that.

Gemini May 21 - June 20: Make sure you add hot dogs to your grocery list... Add the hot dogs to your grocery list.

Cancer June 21 - July 22: You stepped on a bug earlier and even though you may not have known. It that was so uncool.

Leo July 23 - August 22: That’s no moon; it’s a space station.

Virgo August 23 - September 22: Watch a Disney movie ok?

Libra September 23 - October 22: JUST STOP. NOW. PLEASE.

Scorpio October 23 - November 21: Trapped in a void of subconsciousness, the darkness may ensnare you, launching you into an alternate consciousness.

Sagittarius November 22 - December 21: Be the best sausage king of Chicago you can be.

Capricorn December 22 - January 19: Make sure you dress warm for the oncoming storm.

Sudoku

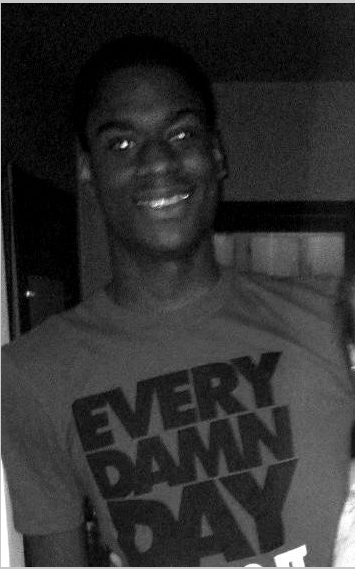
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9	1		3		5	2		
				7	1			8
							6	
4		3	1		9	8		2
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7			5	2				
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	3		6					5

SPORTS

It Starts from Within

Spotlight

Michael Parham



By ROY BAHNAM, I
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During the prehistoric ages, a young dinosaur was born. Born with extremely small hands, he had a very difficult time catching things, such as footballs. His name was Michael. Mike, as some called him (along with many other nicknames such as Dino, Aubrey, Beat, Scoop, Chris Bosh, Michelangelo and various dinosaur names), sought the limelight on the football field, but was instead known for his inability to catch. One day, however, he grew his big boy hands and started catching the ball as if he were nothing short of a black Spider-Man.

Some know Mike as the kid who is never on time for school and is always tired, but others know Mike as the boisterous goof who will overreact and "die" (fall on the ground) and scream and run in circles at the smallest insult directed towards any one person. You can hear him yelling in the locker room after school anywhere within the building, or getting "dumb light" in the middle of the hallways to certain music. Yup, that's Mike.

You can catch him in the weight room with me working on his "2014 best body," as he likes to call it, taking his sweet time and saying, "COOL IT B" thirty five times too many, or outside running routes and catching balls from me trying to "get this money." He may be a tad lazy and a little too slow to get changed and go outside, but he's a hard worker and ignores the people who say he "can't do this" and "won't do that." He just does it.

Mike's vocabulary is extremely colorful, to say the least. We have all definitely learned a word or two from it—anything from "I'm a FORCE," "SCUMP SCUMP," "ayeee top," "hip-pery," "smoove yin," "brolic," "free my mans" and many, many more. Hearing him say these words make most people shake their heads, but others, including myself, laugh uncontrollably. Often, he misspells every word of a text and, for some odd reason, he feels the need to break up one sentence into six different texts. He brings a different type of energy no matter where he goes, a kind of positive energy that makes others around him get into in a better mood instantly. Nevertheless, he's still beat.

If you ever get the chance, say "What's up" to Mike so he can show off his new pearly whites after getting his braces off. Don't worry, he may be a dinosaur, but he doesn't bite. He's a good dude, a beast and of course he's a "force." If you have the time, get to know him. Tell him his quarterback sent you.

By TARAN WISE, II
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"I don't think we're the biggest, fastest, or strongest team...but we definitely have the most spirit. Everyone believes they can be a champion. We go into every match as the underdog. We...go into every match believing we can win, because if we don't believe we can win how can we expect it? It starts from within."

Brendan Maguire (III) spoke these words before the Boston Latin School wrestling team took on Malden Catholic High School on the eve of February 1. The 120 pound versatile sophomore, who switches between 120 and 126 pounds, secured a tie for BLS at 31 to 31 with a spontaneous pin to finish the night, despite the team's shared opinion that the score should never have been that close. Nevertheless, the Wolfpack wrestling team has had three consecutive winning seasons, this being the third. A peek into the current season reveals a meet at Catholic Memorial High School (CM), a successful tournament in a sandwich in Sandwich, Massachusetts, and a perfect home match against

Boston College High School (B.C. High). The Wolfpack knew they were in for a fight when the meet against CM, a school that sported a record of 21 to 1, started. Kenny Nguyen (II) had his first varsity match against them at 170 pounds. He looked like a stud out there, at least in the first period. Stamina is key for a long six minutes of wrestling, and towards the end, Latin's 170 pound-er was showing signs of fatigue. Even though BLS lost, they put up 27 points against a team ranked in the top ten, an impressive feat.

Switching gears from dual-meets to tournaments, Sandwich High School, along with twelve other teams received a wakeup call on the morning of January 25. BLS shook the South Shore when they took home second place out of 14 teams total. Furthermore, Ben "Fire" Marshall (I) (106 pounds), Brendan Maguire (III) (120 pounds), Dan "CapDan" Lei (II) (132 pounds), Phil Nguyen (I) (170 pounds), and Sébastien "Cradle King" Philémon (II) (182 pounds) all took individual second places in their respective weight classes.

Coach Gibbons was a 1993 state champion at 130 pounds when he

wrestled for the Boston College High School Eagles. He and Coach Barry, another Wolfpack wrestling coach, both have history with B.C. High, but since coming to BLS they have not regretted their move. Two years ago, Gibbons was named Dual County League (DCL) coach of the year and BLS wrestling came in second place in the DCL standings. Even though the BLS wrestling team has been successful the past two seasons, they suffered a tough loss by just one point to B.C. High last season. This year was different though. Possibly one of the most passionate meets in the Wolfpack's last four years was when B.C. High entered the wolves' territory on January 16. The all-around good match, resulting in a perfect night, ended with BLS conquering the Eagles 39 to 28.

A winning record. A team full of individuals committed to the program in one way or another. Three coaches who know the path to the Promised Land. What more could the BLS wrestling team want? I'll tell you what. A 106 pound wrestler to replace Ben Marshall, class of 2014, who will not be with the program next year. That's what.

Track or Joke?

upon.

As I realized that people frequently skip track practice, I decided to look into it more and find out the real reason as to why people skip track. Some said that it was an academic issue, others said that it was a physical issue, but then I came across a few students who said, "I just don't feel like it!"

To further investigate this atrocity, I decided to interview those who are committed, and do go to track, about those who do not. I then went around the school asking, "How do you feel about this lack of commitment?"

"It angers me!" said Nicholas Santiago (III), "I try my hardest every day and people just take it as a sick joke!"

"It annoys me because they don't take it seriously because track is actually hard...it is not a joke!" said Krisjanis Ule (III).

The last student-athlete I interviewed was one Griffin Burns (III), who

simply just said, "Track is no joke!"

Overall, as a member of the track team, I must say that the winter track program at BLS is a very hands-on and rewarding experience that I very much enjoyed and loved for the past few months. Run by the wonderful, Coach Meagher, who deeply cares about his players, the practices are well designed, appropriately difficult and an overall enjoyable time.

When I interviewed Coach Meagher, he had this to say: "I am very proud of all my runners and how the program did this year! Over 100 girls and over 50 boys participated." On the subject of how the team did this year, he said, "It is not about the wins and losses, it is about participation and having fun!" Overall, I would highly recommend track for anybody who is looking to get a good workout, hang out with friends and is willing to proudly represent our school.

Even Cooler Runnings

stated, "I'm not a person who likes to quit, I put my heart into it and I know for a fact that people are going to help this team."

Watts and the break man, Marvin Dixon, make up the two-man bobsled team traveling to Sochi. After qualifying for the 2014 Sochi games, Watts and Dixon had to face a tough reality that threatened to impede their Olympic dreams. They had zero dollars and zero cents to travel to Russia and to purchase equipment. They were eighty thousand dollars away from continuing the legacy that is the Jamaica bobsled team.

It is said that there is no such thing as "fast cash," but that may not apply to inspiring athletes who have come from humble beginnings and have overcome innumerable obstacles to achieve their Olympic dreams and to touch the hearts of millions of people. When Watts had stated in an interview that they needed to raise eighty thousand dollars to go to the Olympics, a crowdfunding site was set up on the website crowdtilt.com within hours. In the first

twenty-four hours alone, the site raised over sixteen thousand dollars. Soon after, the site raised almost one hundred thirty thousand dollars, far more than what the team needed in the first place. People from all 50 states, as well as people from 49 other countries, have donated money to the cause. This goes to show what social media and a little motivation can do.

Olympic bobsledding is going to be a tough event this Winter Games. With 22 teams competing, and many of them coming from countries much, much colder than Jamaica, Watts and Dixon definitely have their work cut out for them. In this sport, however, just like in many other Olympic events, even the most talented and prepared athletes cannot win without heart. With numerous supporters from Jamaica, the United States and all around the world, Watts and Dixon have the heart and determination to do well in Sochi. They have already beaten all odds and obstacles; now they just need to feel the rhythm and feel the rhyme.

By LILY CAFFREY-LEVINE, III
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throughout all the buzz of the Sochi Olympics, there is one team that everyone cannot help but root for: the Jamaican bobsled team. Many people may recall the 1993 movie, "Cool Runnings," which told the story of the 1988 Jamaican bobsled team. What many do not know, however, is what happened to the team in the years after their heartwarming performance at the Calgary games, and what it all means for their return in Sochi.

After their Olympic debut in 1988, the Jamaican bobsled team returned to the Olympics to compete in 1992, 1994, 1998 and 2002. Although they have not performed well in these past games, they were able to show improvement each time. They were not able to qualify for the 2006 or 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Just like all the other various obstacles they have faced, that did not stop them. In an interview with ESPN, sled driver Winston Watts

SPORTS

Rowing to the Championships

BY MICHELLE NG, I,
TORI CAHILL, I &
ALICIA ZHANG, III
COPY EDITOR, CONTRIBUTING & STAFF WRITER

If you’ve ever stayed late after school, wandering the halls post-educational hours, you’ve most likely seen and/or heard them: running laps, doing ab circuits, shouting encouragements in the secret hallway above the lower gym that no one realizes actually exists. Enter: the crew team. Since its establishment in 2003, Boston Latin School’s girls’ crew team has trained hard to compete against both local powerhouses and national teams. Highlights of the past few years have included racing in the Head of the Charles, the beloved Saratoga Springs Regatta and the Massachusetts Public School Championship. It hasn’t been since 2011, however, that BLS Crew has sent a boat to Nationals. This season,

the team is ready to change that. While rowing used to be a punishment for slaves back in the day, it is a sport that countless girls at BLS have come to love. Crew requires a unique combination of physical strength and mental confidence; and through never-ending laps, stairs, circuits and erg (rowing machine) pieces, rowers gain both. This year, the girls are supported by their new coach, Carolyn Glandorf, and senior captains, Tori Cahill (I) and Michelle Ng (I), who will help them surpass any physical or mental limits they have previously placed upon themselves. The mottos for this season are to take risks and for the team to push itself to be faster than ever. With such an amazing group of people, BLS Crew will be able to take those risks. Varsity has not even been practicing for a month yet is already dedicated and close, and the girls really know how to motivate

each other. Meanwhile, Coach Carolyn is there to constantly push the team toward its goal of a championship. As an Athletic Honor Roll graduate of the University of Virginia and a member of a two-time NCAA Championship team, she definitely knows the path to gold. “Through strong character and work effort, the goals each girl set for themselves can be achieved,” said Carolyn, “and it’s the coach’s role to assist them in getting there. I ask them to work hard, enjoy their teammates and find time to laugh.” So far, Carolyn has started off the season with high expectations, inspiration and hard workouts—three components needed to guarantee success. The first regatta to kick off the season will be the Salvo Cup, an annual race against Brookline and Hingham High Schools renowned for freezing temperatures and biting wind. “We know we have what it takes,” says Anna Peng (III). “It is just a matter of determination and mental preparedness. With our new coach and our strong team, we have that under our control and we are looking to start the season strong with a win at the Salvo Cup.”

It is confidence like this that helps the girls get through each day of training, and it is the improvement seen after every practice that feeds their desire to win. With about two months before the Salvo Cup, BLS Crew is ready to row its way to the championships and add a new banner to the collection.



ROWERS ERGING DURING PRESEASON

Hot Shots on the Court

BY SAMANTHA TO, II
PHOTO EDITOR

A basketball game is not truly complete without a rowdy home court crowd, an unforeseen comeback and a faceoff between two equally matched teams. On a Tuesday night rematch against the Westford Grey Ghosts following a loss on the road, Boston Latin put on a heart-stopping performance for the crowd, making it one of the most memorable games of the season. After heading to half-time down by 8 points, most people in the crowd did not expect a run by the Wolfpack that would make their opponents sweat. The start of the fourth quarter was taken by storm as Peter Honzik (II) laid down a jump hook at the low post, Owen Ward (I) went for a hard block while the Grey Ghosts attempted a fast break and Adam Mikula (II) drove down the baseline and to the hoop for a clean layup. The real game changer was the back-to-back three pointers by Peter Skerett (II). Latin got its first lead of the game with a layup by Ward, making it 49-48. This change in momentum seemed like it would lead to a win for the home team but throughout the game the boys proved that a major weakness of the team was its free throw shooting, making only three of six critical attempts at the line. This ultimately led to a loss. Despite the loss, Boston Latin’s

boys’ basketball has been a driving force on the court with their dynamic range of players. One of whom, Adam Mikula, is notorious for shooting buckets at the three-point line. He is averaging 17 points, five rebounds and four assists per game for the season. Needless to say these statistics are a result of both his talent and his devotion to the game. The second year co-captain and soon-to-be Dual County All Star is an exemplary player both on and off the court, expressing, “I am never truly satisfied; I always strive to be the best player I can be by working hard every day. To improve, you have to stay disciplined and really play with passion, and I hope to pass that work hard attitude to my team so we can all improve together.” The six foot four center, Peter Honzik, boasts a combination of size, athleticism and skill that make him an unparalleled asset for this team. He takes the responsibility of the position with great pride, saying, “When I’m playing well, it opens up shots for my teammates. If I get double teamed that means someone else is open and gets the opportunity to make an easy shot. Asserting myself on the offensive boards can extend the play as well, giving us another chance to score.” Whether it is Brian O’Dowd (II) boxing out to get the defensive rebound or Julian Murtagh-Lux (II) shooting a jumper from the corner,

the boys’ diverse strengths and abilities undoubtedly complement each other and display what genuinely constitutes the sport of basketball. As the season is now sadly approaching its end, the team only has three games left. Do not worry, however, because if you have yet to witness their greatness thus far, you are in luck. Their last home game will be on February 11 against Acton-Boxborough Regional High School. As for their games on the road, co-captain Jack O’Toole (I) hopes that “As a senior, [we] win all of our remaining games so that we can qualify for the State tournament.” Before he was able to look ahead, however, he reminisced on the past season, saying, “I will most remember my last season on the basketball team not only for the actual games but also the fun times on the bus and in the locker room ‘hitting that nae nae.’ I will also remember playing alongside my protégé and fellow Lurch, Peter Honzik.” With only three seniors from the team graduating this year and Chris Keville (III) rising up as key member of the lineup, the future for the Boston Latin School basketball team looks more than promising. This team possesses all the tools they need not to be great, but to be the best. They have the intelligence, the determination, the discipline and the potential that will separate them from the rest and will allow them to win it all next season.

Spotlight
Roy Bahnam



BY PATRICK FAHY, I &
ROSS GARRITY, II
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

A cunning, witty quarterback with luscious, always perfect hair that plays for a New England-based football team. No, not Tom Brady, but the incomparable Roy Bahnam. Yes, that is how his name is spelled, even if not one article on him has ever agreed on that conglomeration of letters. This tall, handsome, eccentric senior excels on the football field, while also talented in many other aspects of life. Roy loves (cat)fishing, listening to rappers from Toronto and applying Just for Men Touch of Gray. He is by far the sweetest, most emotional person you’ll ever get the pleasure of meeting. He’s as kindhearted and poignant as anyone throughout the school, always trying to make sure his friends are okay even if this “friend” is someone he talked to once. Roy has a pearly white smile that’s so beautiful you can’t even look at it. Of course, he never misses a chance, however, to exhibit that immaculate smile of his. He’ll tell you that he’s going along with the “no smiling for pictures” rule one minute, and the next minute he makes two of his friends that are way too old to be in this school look like idiots. Nonetheless, don’t let his “sweetheart personality” fool you. There is no greater time that Roy is feeling some type of way than when he steps on the football field. Roy leaves his Aubrey Graham mindset behind and enters a completely uncharacteristic killer psyche. It doesn’t matter whether he’s flinging a tight spiral down the field or shrieking his heart out on the sidelines; Roy is always giving 110 percent effort, all the time, no matter what! That’s probably why he was named captain of the team and later a Dual County League (DCL) All Star. He rarely ever makes mistakes and is one of the hardest workers you could encounter. He might not have been a star when he first started playing, but over the years his play has become something so beautiful it’s tough to look at. All jokes aside, Roy is truly a great person. I remember walking into my seventh grade homeroom and not knowing one boy in the room. I quickly did a scan and caught a glimpse of Roy, with his messy hair, goofy smile and just general awkwardness all around. I remember thinking, “This kid seems a little foolish, but I’ll give him a shot,” and since then we’ve been acquaintances, secret enemies and eventually close friends. Today, I know that whenever I’m in a pinch, Roy is one of the first friends that I can call, because he’ll be willing to drop almost anything to help me out. I’m glad to have gotten to know Roy as a friend, teammate and co-captain, and I can’t wait to see what the future has in store for Roy. Now I’m going to cut it short, like my height. We hope you have learned a few things about Roy and can now assume a great deal about him, because Roy truly loves when people assume things about him. So, assume all you want!

SPORTS

Seahawks Soar as Broncos Stumble

By Adam Kamoune, II & Gabe Edelman, II
Contributing Writers

The 48th iteration of the National Football League’s championship was anticipated to be incredible. It had the Denver Broncos, the league’s No. 1 ranked offense, matched up against the Seattle Seahawks, the league’s No.1 defense. The Broncos were coming off a handy victory over the Patriots, with the Seahawks grinding out a close game to triumph over their divisional rival, the 49ers. After beating the 49ers, outspoken Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman made national news for disparaging comments he made in an interview immediately after the game. When asked about his scuffle with the 49ers’ Michael Crabtree, Sherman responded, “I’m the best corner in the game! When you try me with a sorry receiver like Crabtree, that’s the result you gonna get.” In the ever hungry-for-news two weeks prior to the Super Bowl, Sherman’s comments took the forefront. Many called his outbursts and general physicality during games unsportsmanlike, while others praised him for such self-confidence and passion for the game. Sherman frequently cited himself as a role model, being from the poverty and violence-stricken neighborhood of Compton, Los Angeles and also a Stanford graduate. He even took to the podium to criticize Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning, with Sherman commenting that Manning “throws ducks.” Manning had the greatest season for a

quarterback as well as the best for an offense, with a record breaking 55 regular season touchdowns, and 5,477 passing yards. Manning continued to defy expectations at age 38. After a long and storied career, pundits and fans everywhere were starting to form an opinion on the former University of Tennessee graduates’s legacy. Many believed that after



SEAHAWKS LB MALCOLM SMITH, SUPERBOWL MVP, CELEBRATES IN CONFETTI

the record-setting year, a Super Bowl title would cement him as the greatest quarterback in history, surpassing the likes of Joe Montana, Tom Brady, Johnny Unitas and Denver’s own John Elway. Despite the immense excitement leading up to the clash, the game itself fell flat. Longtime Alabama coach Paul Bryant once said, “Offense sells tickets;

defense wins championships,” and on that Sunday night, the Seahawks had both. Starting a mere 12 seconds into the game, on the Broncos’ first play, the Seahawks forced a safety, netting them an early 2 to 0 lead. Following two field goals and a Marshawn Lynch touchdown, the Seahawks lead had ballooned to 15. Manning, having already thrown an interception, had a deflected pass snatched from the reach of runningback Knowshon Moreno by Malcolm Smith, who returned it 69 yards for a touchdown, and a resounding 22 to 0 score at halftime. Amidst performances by Bruno Mars and the Red Hot Chili Peppers at halftime, analysts praised the Seahawks, but refused to rule out a

comeback from Manning. Only a few seconds after the two sides reemerged from their locker rooms, it became clear to viewers everywhere that a comeback was not in the cards for Denver. After an injury-plagued season, Seahawks wide receiver Percy Harvin seized the second half kickoff and used his blistering pace to take it back 87 yards for a touchdown, boosting Seattle’s advantage to 29 points. A few drives later, it seemed like the incompetent Broncos had finally begun to get in a groove, putting together a cohesive offense for the first time all night. Any hopes of offensive potency were dashed, however, when receiver Demaryius Thomas was stripped of the ball, giving the Seahawks possession in Denver territory. Sophomore quarterback Russell Wilson, who had hardly set a foot wrong all night, zipped in a pass to receiver Jermaine Kearse, who broke multiple tackles for yet another spirit-crushing touchdown. Denver finally managed to get on the board with a Demaryius Thomas touchdown followed by a Wes Welker conversion, but Seattle continued to beat the dead horse by piling on another touchdown, to end the game at a resounding 43 to 8. Seattle’s blue and green rained down as confetti from the catwalks of New Jersey’s MetLife stadium while Manning and the Broncos limped off the field. Richard Sherman, injured and taken out of the game, returned to the field to raise the Lombardi trophy with coach Pete Carroll and Russell Wilson for Seattle’s first Super Bowl victory.

Playoff Push: Do the Celtics Stand a Chance?

By Eli Stoloﬀ, IV
Contributing Writer

Boston sports fans over the years have grown accustomed to winning sports teams. All four major sports teams in Boston produce winning records, playoff appearances and championship hopes just about every season. Last year, the Celtics struggled to get into the playoffs and were eliminated early by their rivals, the New York Knicks. In the off-season, a very old Celtics team made multiple critical roster changes to make the team younger. It started with trading long time veteran and captain, Paul Pierce, and veteran and heart of the Celtics, Kevin Garnett, along with Jason Terry to the Brooklyn Nets for Gerald Wallace, Kris Humphries, MarShon Brooks, Kris Joseph, Keith Bogans and three first round draft picks. Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett played key roles in the Celtics 2008 championship win. They also sent nine-year coach

Doc Rivers to the Los Angeles Clippers for a first round draft pick. They signed the 37-year-old former coach of Butler University, Brad Stevens, who has never coached a National Basketball Association (NBA) game in his life. This was the start of a rebuilding year for the Celtics, who are almost an entirely different team from that 2008 championship. In fact, the Celtics only have one player on the active roster remaining from that championship team: current captain and point guard, Rajon Rondo. Rondo missed the first half of this season due to recovery from knee surgery which sidelined him for most of last season as well. In the 2013 draft, the Celtics drafted forward/center, Kelly Olynyk from Gonzaga University. Olynyk and the Celtics’ 2012 big draft pick, center Jared Sullinger, will try to replace big man, Kevin Garnett. It was the start of a new chapter for the Boston Celtics heading into the 2013-2014 NBA season. The team played poorly to start the year and continued to

go on a cold streak with a few win streaks in between. Now in February, the Celtics have only won 15 games. They have a 15-33 record, 13th in the eastern conference and last in the Atlantic division. The Celtics recently made trades and parted with Courtney Lee, Jordan Crawford and MarShon Brooks, welcoming in Joel Anthony and Jerryd Bayless with hopes of making a final push to get into the playoffs, although only two months remain in the NBA season. It is going to be a tough challenge for this young Celtics team that has not spent much time together and the odds are definitely against them. Some doubters have begun to believe that the Celtics may be “tanking” or losing games on purpose in the hopes of gaining a better pick in the upcoming draft. Talented prospects like Jabari Parker, Andrew Wiggins and Joel Embiid are in college and will most likely enter the draft and fit in well with the Celtics organization. Celtics fans are used to seeing the

team in the playoffs. Now fans will be hoping for a playoff spot, rather than hoping to hoist championship banner number 18 in the rafters. It has been a long time since the Celtics missed the playoffs. It has become clear to fans that the Celtics are no longer the dominant force in the NBA they used to be. The Celtics will have a tough challenge competing with the talent in the NBA. The Celtics will not be contending for a championship in the near future; the team will continue to rebuild. For now the Celtics have a long road ahead of them, and need to turn things around if they want to make the playoffs. It will be interesting to see if the Celtics can achieve another playoff season with this inexperienced group of young players. Fans want to see the Celtics make the playoffs and keep the strong reputation that Boston basketball has held over the years. Can the Celtics pull off a miracle and keep Boston’s tough reputation alive?

Just Keep Swimming

coming back to swimming year after year. In order to hold swim practice, the team must make the journey to the Murphy School in Dorchester, a voyage often hindered by the unreliable nature of our transportation. Once we arrive, we are expected to change, set up the lane lines, then immediately turn our attention to the workout that has been provided. Coach Conley, a veritable veteran of the swim team, has been training swimmers from BLS for innumerable years, a man that has truly dedicated himself to both the sport and the team. The only surprise is that he has willingly chosen to continue coaching the boys’ swim team, despite the many frustrations that come with dealing with such an unpredictable group of

young men. Nevertheless, for all of our disadvantages, whether they be the defective lane lines or the lack of diving blocks, the team has persevered throughout the season to constantly improve. For some members of the team, such as captains Thomas Worthy (I) and Jackie Liang (I), as well as Haniu Ren (II), swimming has become second nature after years of unrelenting training; these three consistently lead the team with the fastest times. In addition, veterans like Andrew Xiao (III) and Andy Hui (II) have played integral roles in the team since first joining years ago and have noticeably improved since then, demonstrating unparalleled dedication and enthusiasm for the sport. The

team is always receptive to new members as well, with there only being one requirement to join: you need to know how to swim. There are certain things that I will not miss about the BLS swim team: waiting an hour for a bus to show up, having to use pliers to forcibly tighten the lane lines, coming home from a road meet at close to 9:00 P.M. Yet I would not trade this experience for anything else. We may not have the fastest team in the league, but we understand the importance of constant improvement, and we definitely know how to have fun. As long as those core tenets remain in place, the boys’ swim team will continue to resonate as a force to be reckoned with.

By Jiaming Huang, I
Contributing Writer

When I say “Latin,” you say “Oo-rah!” The battle cry of the Boston Latin School (BLS) boys’ swim team reverberates throughout the pool as it prepares to face off against an opposing school’s team in event after event, designed with one purpose: to determine who is the fastest. This is the arena of the swimmer: an exhilarating competition where everything else fades away save the water and the cheers of teammates and spectators. Any swimmer on the team would tell you that there is not anything else quite like it. For many, it’s the reason why each of us keeps